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**NOVEMBER ROWEN**

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By CORNELIUS WEYGANDT

DOWN JERSEY  
THE RED HILLS  
THE BLUE HILLS  
NOVEMBER RÖVEN  
THE WHITE HILLS  
TUESDAYS AT TEN  
THE DUTCH COUNTRY  
A PASSING AMERICA  
THE TIME OF YEATS  
PHILADELPHIA FOLKS  
THE TIME OF TENNYSON  
THE WISSAHICKON HILLS  
NEW HAMPSHIRE NEIGHBORS  
IRISH PLAYS AND PLAYWRIGHTS  
A CENTURY OF THE ENGLISH NOVEL





MT. WASHINGTON IN THE WHITE MOUNTAINS  
*by Currier and Ives*

# November Rowen

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## *A Late Harvest from the Hills of New Hampshire*

by

CORNELIUS WEYGANDT



*At evening time it shall be light*

—ZECHARIAH 14:7

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D. APPLETON-CENTURY COMPANY  
INCORPORATED  
NEW YORK 1941 LONDON

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**PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

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*To*  
S.M.W., C.N.W., AND A.M.W.

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## November Rowen

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IT was a saying in Sandwich that: "Loveland Hines be haying till snow flies." He never denied the allegation, but he did deny that frost took the strength out of aftermath cut and made into hay on the edge of winter. Again and again he would repeat, as if it were the refrain of a song: "There be no hay so sweet as November rowen." The neighborhood did not hold with him on that issue, but he would point to fat cattle in his barn along towards spring, and declare their well-being was due to those ten tons he harvested just short of Thanksgiving. He never convinced his neighbors wise in the handling of cattle that there was a substance in the late crop beyond that in any was cut in July, the proper month for haying, but they could not otherwise explain the plumpness of his cattle and the abundance of milk all winter through.

I take the phrase from Loveland, but I make no claim that my "November rowen" has a substance beyond that of the earlier harvestings of *The White Hills* and *New Hampshire Neighbors*. I feel the menace of "evening and winter coming on together." Perhaps the very realization of that menace makes me more aware of what blessing there is in human fellowship. As the days shorten and snow caps "The Back Mountains," we all feel a greater need of neighboring than in "the long yellow days" of midsummer. It was in late

ber, and it may be a hint or two of the se  
comes with its stripped woods, or of the se  
end to the distance, or of the far carrying  
es to cowbells or falling water or winds th  
caught in the writing, to offset, in a measu  
of it all. There is red in grasses and low heat  
of hips and haws and berries far into Nov  
ern landscape, like the northern heart, mus  
ys slowly.

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**NOVEMBER ROWEN**



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## The Happy Puritan

[for GERALDINE P. BISSELL]

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IF the early settlers of New England were a Puritanical lot, ascetic, self-denying, riding themselves with a curb, their descendants had ceased to be such by the end of the Revolutionary War. A Puritan in many respects myself, I am in sympathy, in moderation, with what the country holds Puritanism to be, but not with a Puritanism that runs counter to human nature. It is not a contradiction to say that Puritans are not always Puritanical. So resolutely had Puritanism been preached at me in my youth by school teachers and ministers from New England and by the Concord school of writers that I was not prepared on residence in New Hampshire to find out how far from Puritanical had been my neighbors of past times in Sandwich, and how far from Puritanical were my neighbors of the present.

Collaboration with two neighbors of the old stock in North Sandwich in preparing an outline for the Sandwich Historical Society of the history of the people of a seven mile round brought out in great detail the life of this district since its settlement just after the first war with England. Old folks were interviewed who could reconstruct for us what had happened to people who had lived in the houses now marked only by cellar holes, sweet brier roses and lilac

bushes. The people in the houses still standing told us much of their ancestors and their neighbors told us still more. There were items in print in local histories and newspapers and in biographies of local celebrities. Church records were full of information, some of it too scandalous to repeat. The entries in old account books spoke volumes, old letters gave picturesque details, old diaries contributed their share of fact and gossip. If we are to judge by these sources, rum and not Godliness was the chief concern of New Hampshire's yesterday.

So, too, was it, I hazard the guess, throughout New England and the Middle States, and all points south within the original colonies. I can speak from documentary evidence only of New Hampshire and Pennsylvania, but it is no exaggeration to say that there were more entries of sales of rum in the account books that I have seen from these two states for the period from the Revolutionary War to the Civil War than of all other commodities together. Tea is second to rum in sales, being purchased in quantity even in the hard times of the second war with England, when it brought \$1.25 a half pound according to my old account book from Wakefield. Tobacco is third in sales. Folks had to have what comforted them, no matter what the price. The conditions of their lives were hard; the food, outside of the game late fall and winter brought, was monotonous. Boiled pudding of cornmeal and blood, baked beans, potatoes and parched corn lay heavy on the stomach and demanded some leavening agent. The winter was long and confining, and taxing of strength when it had to be braved outdoors in getting in wood and in breaking roads, or in trapping and hunting. There was no wonder men turned to the warmth, however temporary, there was in rum and hard cider, to the stimulation that tea affords, to the soothing influence of tobacco.

Most of the Puritans, like other folks, felt the necessity

of color in their lives. Liquor could bring that, as sex could, and religion, but there was a necessity for less exciting kinds of color. They liked red things about them. It may well have been the prevalence of red lead that induced them to paint their houses red, but it was the innate love of redness instinctive in the race that took them to mahogany as the preferred wood for furniture. Where mahogany was not procurable, and cherry was, cherry became the second choice for chairs and tables, light stands and chests, sofas and beds. The pine panelling of the walls of the old houses and their window trim and chair rails and mantels reddened with age. Finally came that devotion to madder that characterized the mid-nineteenth century. Old dining room pieces, linen chests and side tables were maddered over their curly maple. Burl bowls of maple, bird's-eyed, were maddered, as were salt boxes and candle holders of pumpkin pine, spoon racks and spice boxes, corner cabinets and kitchen dressers. Even to this day the chair and ladder peddler, with his great load miraculously holding together on his red truck, has a large proportion of his wares of the color of life.

The figure heads of ships, though the most of them are as proportionless as the angels on Pennsylvania Dutch fractur, were supposed to be suggestive of sirens. In their contours they were far from Puritanical. That they were as expressionless and unalluring as the Indian maidens posed before cigar stores, does not seem to have lessened one whit the esteem in which they were held. The gaily colored Schimmel toys were bought eagerly by the men of the New England regiments at Gettysburg, and Staffordshire figures equally frivolous and brilliantly hued were found on the mantel pieces of people who were "some pumpkins." Gay glazes for redware pottery, bright red and pink black peppered, were held in high approval from Dorset in Vermont to Buxton in Maine. Samplers and needlepoint covers for

chairs were treasured as "gay and beautiful," and, when they came along, patchwork quilts and hooked rugs. The scrap books of the middle years of the nineteenth century were as full of cards of red and yellow, purple and gold, as those of the red hills of Pennsylvania.

Paintings of the Garden of Eden in churches, and of other scenes from the Bible, conventionalized to suit this home or that, were not in the loudest of colors, but they were far from drab. The wall papers that had been brought from England and those made in imitation of them in this country were more lively than severe. The paintings for "scenery" mirrors and for clocks were designedly warm in color, some of them positively startling in their reds and yellows. Touches of red and gold were laid on about silhouettes, and the tinsel work on glass was scintillant with golds and silvers, reds and blues. Currier and Ives prints were most of them gaudy affairs. All these worldly sorts of wall decoration were as popular in so-called Puritan New England as in the supposedly less continent states to the south and west.

The considerable admixture of Indian blood everywhere in the colonies may account for the love of red and yellow in combination prevalent everywhere in New Hampshire. Yellow houses with corners and windows and doors picked out in red are one manifestation of it, and all the furniture in a boarding house so repainted another. The combination is met with in Indian baskets of sweet grass and in knife holders and other knick knacks for the wall of brown ash made by basket makers of unquestionably English names. It may well be, of course, that these basket makers had Indians among their forbears. The physiognomy of some of them I know would so indicate. Shoes with moccasin-like effects may be traced, too, to Indian influence, and a love of the woods and of hunting and fishing in certain families

was held to be theirs by their neighbors because they had "come in by way of Oldtown," Oldtown in Maine having been for years an Indian reservation. You come upon Indian motives, too, in beadwork bags.

The painting on glass on Indian subjects may have come from *Hiawatha* rather than through pride in Indian blood. A neighbor of ours is proud beyond words of his pure Indian descent, and another, with pink and white complexion and eyes of deepest blue, boasted of an Indian grandmother. In certain families in which the high cheek bones and straight black hair would seem to indicate the persistence of Indian traits any hint of the presence of Indian blood would be taken as an insult. In more than one instance, though, where nothing is said about the possession of Indian blood, a decided flair for collecting objects of the Indian past of our countryside is evidenced. One such man has discovered what he thinks is a pre-Indian camping site, with stone implements that will perhaps some day prove their makers one with the argillite man of the Delaware River drift believed in by Charles Conrad Abbott. Another is a distinguished explorer and mountain climber whose father could sit for a portrait of Paugus himself.

There is not much art in the painting on glass of Minnehaha and Hiawatha. It is a study in warm brown and greens light and dark. The principals wear garments of light buckskin picked out in red. Minnehaha has a neckpiece and a belt of beadwork in red and gold and beadwork addenda of red and gold hanging from her belt. Hiawatha carries a bow slung about his shoulders, and a pouch of beadwork. In the right background by a tepee in brown an Indian brave, half naked and with feathers in his hair, is crouching low and looking askance at the lovers. There is laughing water tumbling down white in upper left and the bluest of blue sky in uppermost left centre. All the background is

forest. To 1855, the year of *Hiawatha's* publication, the Indian past of America sung by Longfellow was our truest romance, as it had been growing to be for the half century previous. Though *Hiawatha* was fiction, and fiction had been of dubious propriety to several religious sects, *Hiawatha* was accepted as right and proper. It was the Friends, perhaps, who held out longest against made up stories. I can remember protests against novels by a Quaker librarian as recently as the late eighties. Most of the Puritan sects were quicker to accept fiction, make believe and like forms of untruth.

Even the sternest Puritans could not object to the colors of flames, their reds and golds and thin blues. It was pardonable to have firedogs and tongs and shovels of other than black iron, brass and bellmetal of balls and acorns on andiron tops and on tongs and shovel handles. It was only the Shakers who held resolutely to the absolute utilities in such matters. They used only iron for all fireplace paraphernalia. There is much to be said for the Shakers as the truest Puritans. They went to the logical extreme of denying mating as a human institution. As a result they are almost gone. Canterbury is fast dwindling, Alfred in Maine is gone, and Enfield in western New Hampshire.

There is, of course, an element of vain glory in sleighbells, but they are a necessity to warn of the approach over the snow of one team to another. Without the bells the approaches would be silent. So, too, are cowbells necessary, and so were the bells on lumber sleds and on wagon trains. Decoration is so innate in human nature that men have made their hair sieves of brown hair and black hair, woven together into designs to gladden the eye. Friendly ladies carried card cases of pearl in early nineteenth century days, even if no Miss or Mistress preceded the plain Ann Matlacks or Elizabeth Robertses on the cards ensconced therein.



Sometimes the names that good Puritans bore were more worldly than Rest and Obadiah, a husband and wife of our neighborhood being Ruel and Rhoda.

There was gold on stencilled chairs, on Windsors with stepped down backs and on rush-seated Hitchcocks. Mirrors, you might suppose, would be too worldly for strict Puritans, but they made their appearance early in New Hampshire's history, and persisted down the years in the godliest families. Some of the mirrors had discreet red frames, but even these might have multicolored "sceneries," and those that were not red were generally gilded, a wholly unnecessary worldliness.

There were gay flowers in the garden beds of staunchest Calvinists of the old school, though none of these were as prevalent and persistent as the purple and white lilacs of subdued color. Sunflowers of all sorts, red poppies, red roses and Turks's cap lilies, pink sorrel and pink petunias, and, in latter days, gladiolus and dahlias, were cherished in the gardens of the most rigidly pious. Those who tended such flowers were, of course, not responsible for the gay colors God had given their charges.

The blooming plants in New Hampshire windows, many of which the exigencies of the climate keep indoors all the year round, speak of the love of the old stock for these gauds. Nowhere will you find a greater love of flowers. Yesterday there was on Chase Road old Mrs. McDaniel with her cactuses blooming as they swung from her piazza top. Today there is Mrs. Chase in Whiteface Village with her veritable bower of bloom. Down in South Tamworth is Miss Downs with her porchful of plants. Over at East Sandwich is Miss Fish with her stars of Bethlehem and Madonna lilies. I might go on to Mrs. Hunter in Tuftonboro and to Mrs. Alice Haynes in Henniker. A similar love of color manifests itself in men in a love of variegated

Mexican corn. The discovery of the red ear of flint corn at husking bees accorded in old days the privileges in New Hampshire that were accorded in Pennsylvania.

Tall bush cranberries, barberries and black alder, all red berried, have been standbys for generations in New Hampshire dooryards. Brightly colored apples have been a necessity to us, Porters, Baldwins and Sheepnoses yesterday, Macintoshes today. The mountains southwards of us have taken on peacock hues in the evening all the years the old stock has been here. The mountains west of us have a bloom at sundown that fades from purple to mole grey. Chocorua and the cliffs of Whiteface glow old rose. Men of Puritan ancestry have found all these mountains beautiful against the sky. The forests, blazoned in fall with red and gold, have held the sternest men in wonder and in dream. Dawn and sunset have spread their glories on the skies for Puritans, and triple rainbows and auroras have spanned the dome of heaven for their amazement with flickerings and pulsings of white and green and faint red. Comets have been omens of disaster to believing men and a red moon the forerunner of unimaginable terrors.

Could Puritans, being as human as all the rest of mankind, have failed to rejoice in the great fish flashing silver and red as they raced up the heavy water tumbling down the gorge of Salmon Falls? Have Puritans not found rose-breasted grosbeaks fair, and their cousins, the evening grosbeaks, garrulous and golden, that winter here from November to the edge of May? Have not our native wood duck and tanagers, indigo birds and blue jays, and the parrots and paroquets brought from the south by sailors, warmed the cockles of our northern hearts? Was it not a Puritan corner of Rhode Island that originated the Rhode Island Red fowls, and a Puritan corner of New Hampshire that developed them into the New Hampshire Reds? Has



THE PURITAN LORELEI



not the pelt of the red fox been from our beginnings a symbol of wild beauty to all our country boys? Have not Puritan children chased bright butterflies, milkweed fellows and monarchs, as eagerly as have worldly children? Have we not had a penchant in New Hampshire for red cattle, Devons and Herefords, and for horses of bright bay? Have the Puritans cared less for fairs and circuses and race tracks than the unregenerate? Are not our old singing books full of the most impassioned and the most embellished Italian arias? Did the gravity of Dudley Leavitt prevent him from picturing the lorelei on a reward of merit given a scholar of his?

New Hampshire Puritans were in touch with the Far East through the clipper ships that sailed out of Portsmouth, and in touch with the Near East through the Bible. Gay courting mirrors and cabinets of lacquer and china came from Cathay to our coast, and were handed down as prized possessions in branches of the tidewater families that moved inland. The glories of Solomon's Temple and of the Oriental pageantry of other parts of the Old Testament were very instant to the lives of all church-goers. The Shakers were not the only sect whose members knew ecstasy and trance.

Puritans, like other folks, rejoiced in the warm colors of life in any hue in which they were presented. This old, old woman, with a calico cat under her stove; this old "tarrier" with his prattle of a past of wine, woman and song; this minister who never preached forcefully until he was well liquored with hard cider; and this woman who had wide skylights in her attic that she might watch the march of the stars and follow the red trails of the comets: were within their parts as Puritans and not exceptions to the general run of New Hampshire Protestants.

Will it shock those who regard all Puritans as devoid of

lustiness and mirth, as a church deaconish sort of people devoted to self denial and spiritual concerns, to know that pillars of society of recognized probity had dance halls in their houses, dance halls that they called dance halls and not ball rooms? The little village of Salmon Falls just up Saco from Biddeford alone had four houses in which were these toys, or sinks and drains of hell, as you choose to call them. The one in the Davis house, built in 1820, is typical. Great grandfather Davis had twelve children. He thought the dance hall might keep them at home. They could have a good time among themselves, even without the neighbors' children they had in so often. Eighteen by thirty-six, with a bench all about its walls, a fireplace in the centre of one end and a rounded ceiling, it must have been the scene of high jinks a century ago. Is the thought of Terpsichore as a Puritan institution not easily assimilable? Will you believe that the Congregational Church in Tamworth in 1793 "voted to procure one Barrel of Rum for framing and raising the Meeting House?" Look to page 115 of the *Memoir of the Rev. Samuel Hidden* by E. C. Cogswell, Boston, 1842, for proof of the one. Go to Salmon Falls in Maine and see the dance hall in the Davis house for proof of the other. From Ben Jonson's day down to ours the Puritans have been maligned. They were most of them just folks like the common run of us.

Whatever the Puritans were in the seventeenth and early eighteenth century days their descendants today are a tolerant as well as a gay people. Many of the church records of a hundred years ago show that the grandfathers of our Puritans of today were as tolerant as their descendants. A school superintendent ended his address to the outgoing class from high school by saying: "If you make a success of your lives we shall rejoice in your success. That success will be treasured here among those who knew you best. We

shall be proud of you. But if you make mistakes, we shall not lose interest in you. We shall try to help you to correct those mistakes if you come to us for help. Remember always that your town will be with you always, just as your father and mother will be."

You may read in the town report of another town of the expenditure for morphine for the widow of the town's last minister. The explanation of this is not altogether that the town is tolerant or altruistic, but that it is peace loving. If she has not her dope the lady grows restless and quarrelsome, runs amuck in the village street and makes life miserable for her neighbors. Who shall say there is not reasonableness in this attitude of tolerant Puritans? Or shall we call them Neo-Puritans?

"There is no romantic business in marrying with us," said a man of the old stock to me. "We want a woman who can work and make us comfortable." However that may be, the New Hampshire that I know is tolerant of woman's slips as well as of man's. The neighbors accept man and woman living together out of wedlock, and a child is not necessarily a bar to the marriage of its mother to a man not its father. So it is in Pennsylvania Dutchland and so it is in all the American communities I am familiar with. The country at large has adopted the attitude heralded abroad by the legend on the first statue to William Penn set up in Philadelphia. We are one and all for "toleration," a truth not realized by some of the pressure groups in Washington. As an old church deacon I know says when any irregularities in the lives of his neighbors are pointed out: "It stands to reason they have their reasons for what they do."

As they sat on the barn wharfing at nooning that day fifteen or more years ago, Charles R. Fellows, Moses Hall and Stanley Quimby, and Stanley told us to look well at them, "the last of the Puritans," I could not help thinking

how different they were from the Puritans Hawthorne and my school teachers had told me of. All three were ruddy old fellows, with twinkling eyes, and two of them with words like the flowing water. English to the core, but one of them was unanimated. Two of them had the so-called Celtic animation. Charles Fellows was a master story teller, a mimic and with a power of changing his personality any actor might envy. Stanley Quimby, with no Irish blood in his veins, had a soothing tongue. He was a flattering, gentle spoken man who called everybody "dear" with a most un-Puritan familiarity. Moses Hall was a quiet, retiring man, a prodigious walker, who could tell you in an abstracted way of long journeys with droves of cattle and herds of sheep. They were merry men all three, with those qualities of Merrie England in them that are the birthright of all of English ancestry whatever their religion.

As I think of Hi Currier and Ed, Elbridge Tilton, Fred Bickford, Uriah McDaniel, Alonzo McCrillis, Langdon Ambrose, Frank Grant, Alvah Batchelder, Hiram Corliss, White Penniman, Frank Bryer, Moses Brown, Wilbur Moulton, Warren Moulton, George Wiggin, George Clark, Larkin Weed, Charles Henry White and Curtis Hidden Page, neighbors near and far of yesterday and today, I wonder at the reputation the Puritans have been given. No one could find anything forbidding or sanctimonious or narrow in any of these men. You would pick out friendliness as a distinguishing characteristic of each one, liveliness in most of them and "unco guidness" in none. No one of them but relished a good story. A more human group never existed. Old fellows all when I knew them, they were all but all of them as full of life as of years, men who had lived and had a scorn of mere existence. It is no one of these, though, that I would draw at length, good men and half of them now with God, but Thurston of Granite Corners.



How will this figure fit in with your preconceived ideas of a typical Puritan? A big man, heavily fleshed but muscled. He is above six feet and weighs well over two hundred. Blue-eyed, red-cheeked, bluff, hearty—that's Thurston. A descendant of one of the oldest families of mid-New Hampshire, proud of his ancestry but a hail fellow well met American if there ever was one. The one passion that can master him is anger at the littleness some men can stoop to. He is not much of a church goer but I never knew a better Christian. I like to hear him expound his philosophy. "Things are no use unless they are used," he thunders, and he instances a dozen concrete illustrations before he is through with the subject, ranging from John D. Rockefeller and Colonel Green to his neighbors and himself. All this is preamble to a kindness he intends to do me. But before he gets to the matter that concerns me there is a long disquisition on greed and how most men of possessions get over greed before they are middle aged. "Things are no use unless they do good to someone," he varies his apophthegm. "There's that collection of old books and old papers up above Philbrick's store. They belonged to Hi Hobbs, a school teacher back in the hills a hundred years ago. They have laid up there in that attic since the eighteen fifties. The folks in the store would like to get rid of them, have the place cleaned out. Now, you might find an account book there, or an old biography, that would open up things to you. What's hidden away there useless to anybody else, might be some use to you. You might find something to write about. It would be too bad if they were burned as so many old books and papers have been. What's nothing to one man is everything to another."

Warm-hearted, generous, outspoken, high spirited, he is trusted by his town and honored with office. He is very like, I take it, to his ancestors who cleared this countryside two

hundred years ago. There must have been hundreds of his sort in pre-Revolutionary days. He is jack of all trades and master of most, a man who restores your belief in human nature. A lover of both woods and tillage he looks the lumberman and farmer that he is. Why not consider him as typical of the Yankee as the clergyman or the storekeeper, as the trapper or the whaling captain, as the city merchant or school teacher that rises before us as we think of the Puritan? If not a Puritan Thurston is certainly an integral part of what is left of Puritania, and of what Puritania was in old years.

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## No Word Against Herefords

[for ROBERT S. QUIMBY]

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HE was a Democrat, but we partially forgave him that, he so loved his white-faced cattle. He would allow no word against his party's leader, but his wrath was much deeper when any one in any way disparaged Herefords. "Not good milkers!" he would say, "Perhaps not, if you chance on a strain bred for beef alone. There are milking strains second to none of any breed among them, like mine. It was my grandfather had them first, after he gave up the native brown cattle with crumpled horns they had since men first came here from England. Father inherited that strain, of course, and as long as I can afford to be a farmer I shall not be parted from Herefords. You do not have to have a Jersey or two in a herd of them to bring their milk up to test. They won't let down as much thin stuff as do the Holsteins, but every quart of their milk is milk."

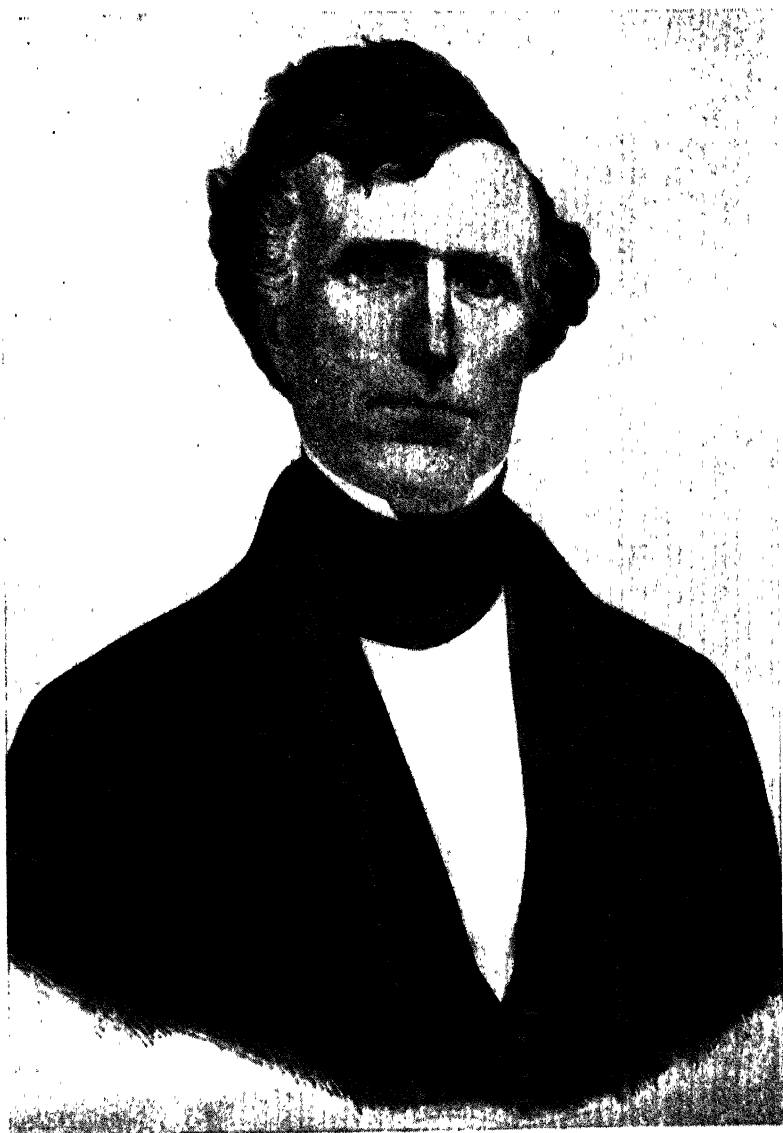
Warming to his panegyric, he would lapse now and then into his ancestral speech, using "be" where his schoolmarms had taught him to use "am" and "are" and "is."

"What oxen they make, too! There be no oxen'll pull so hard or so patiently or so long as a pair of my white-faced beauties. They just lay their weight and their strength against the yoke and whatever it is they are hitched to has

to come along. Yes, Devons be a kindly red and Durhams have the strength if you can make 'em use it, but neither breed can put on muscle on roughage as Herefords can, and neither have their mind to work. Herefords are the cattle for country such as this. They do well on browse when the grass runs short in the mountain pastures. They can take care of themselves, too. A cow turned out with her calf in a by-place does not need any bull nearby to keep a starving bear off that calf. She has the heart, she has the horns, she has the size and weight to make any bear look out. And if he gives her a swipe with a paw as he jumps aside when she charges, she won't up and die from the scratches. She'll keep them clean by licking them and not go off her milk for the calf.

"They tell me you see miles of Herefords on range in the west. What I like, though, be a bunch of picked steers in a pasture back in the hills. I don't care if that pasture be a mite rough, big boulders and piles of stone, and broad bushes of brown hemlock, and patches of raspberries along the walls. They fill your eye and raise your heart with those white faces of theirs lifted up expectant when they smell you coming. Maybe it be salt they be hoping for rather than the sight of you. I think, though, by the way they behave, snuffing and blowing and crowding round you, they care a mite for your company.

"Better be your milch cows on the home meadow, a dozen of them, and everyone knowing you and you knowing everyone of them. The brown of them and the white of them! There be good water for them there, a brook with trout in it that tumbles now, and that again have quiet shallows where those beauties can drink and stand on hot days when the flies be bad. What be nicer than all of them grazing quiet there with their rumps to the wind, against the green of the meadow? Except in dry summers the creatures can-



GENERAL FRANKLIN PIERCE  
*by Nathan Currier*



not keep the grass close. Often you cannot see their hoofs at all, that grass be so hearty and up and growing. Rough the creatures be, of course, after the way of creatures, but kind eyed and sweet breathed. They're dependable, too, steady milkers, and cream to their milk makes whatever you use it on, straight or in sauces, better eating than need be. The neighbors tease me about those white-faced cattle, but I take their raddle for what it is worth. They say: 'Caswell, where do your wife and children come in? Next after the cattle? Is it true that you hold family be family, but Herefords be Herefords?' I tell them there have to be more Caswells to care for more Herefords. They say my slogan be: 'Give me Herefords, or give me death!' I take up that and fling it back in their faces: 'Give me Herefords, or give me death!' "

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## "She Was Wonted to Him"

[for PAUL C. KITCHEN]

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THE lady from Province Pond was showing her neighbors at the auction a book printed in London in the late seventeenth century. Though it purported to be a mother's advice to a daughter, it was probably the work of some semi-starved middle aged man, a poor devil of a hack. One of the chapters was entitled: "How to live with a husband." In a lull in the bidding the lady from Parsonfield said: "It never was the easiest thing for a woman to do, to live with a husband." She looked to see whether the auctioneer was frowning disapproval of conversation in his crowd. Seeing that he was ignoring the chatter, she went on: "There was mother. She always said she hoped she would have ten easy years after father died to compose herself for heaven. She didn't really expect to meet him there, and she wasn't mourning at the prospect of being without him. She always had her answer for him, though, when he started complaining, which was all the time. Don't I remember the two of them at it? It was as good as a play. One day when she could not stand his fault-finding any longer, she said: 'If they send down a golden chariot for you when you die, for to take you up to heaven, you'll be asking for a brass knob to its door before you're willing to step in.' Yet when



he died, she just kind of slumped up, and passed out within a month, though she was but seventy-two to his seventy-nine. It was the excitement of fighting with him kept her alive. She was wonted to him and his ways, you sec.”

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## 7 Miles to Tamworth Vill.

[I.M. CHARLES R. FELLOWS]

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IT was in 1912 I first read that sign:

7 MILES TO  
TAMWORTH VILL.

I had no notion then as we passed it on our way from Birch Interval to Sandwich Centre, at the corner of a road leading east between a high white house to the left and a long white barn to the right, that it would be one day a signpost pointing home. A mile east from that corner with its flat iron of grass was a low white house destined to be our summer residence from middle age to old age. That signpost of red granite is still there but the sign upon the post is gone a decade or more. Its lettering was of the sort in vogue in pre-Civil War days, of a sort that harked back, indeed, to the eighteenth century. It was free hand work, very like printing one comes on in books of our colonial era. A narrow trim nailed along the top of the foot wide board bearing the legend overhung perhaps two inches and protected the signboard proper and its lettering from straight rain, if not from the driving northwesterners of late fall and winter. The ends, too, were boxed in by like protruding boards, which had their share in protecting the lettering.

Uphill that road went over Fellows Hill, that road still goes; and downhill to Cold River; and up again and over Stevenson Hill; and down Stevenson Hill past the house that sheltered Grover Cleveland in his last summers, and along a flat where we once met a yellow cat carrying a green snake in its mouth. Thence it climbs Henderson Hill, and runs down to "Tamworth Vill." past Ordination Rock, on which the Rev. Samuel Hidden was made Congregational minister of Tamworth in 1789.

That white house at the entrance of the road was struck by lightning and burned down some years since, and the great barn was levelled by the hurricane of 1938. Nothing is left but a cellar hole and a pile of debris of what was once a thriving homestead, a great farm, a canning business, a veritable hive of industry. Previous to Leander Pierce's occupancy of this place and his building of the great buildings on it in pre-Civil War days, there had been a country store here and a brickyard. From the days of the War of the Revolution through the days of the Civil War there had been continual going and coming here, "being, doing and having," as the old phrase has it.

A hundred items remain in memory of things seen and heard on the mile of road from Burleigh's Corners, Pierce's Corners, Atwood's Corners, call it which you will, and our place. Here I saw, by the long barn, the first ringneck pheasant I ever saw in Sandwich. Here, on the wall to the right, a young fox delighted one summer to romp along, and drop off behind the wall, when our car was overtaking him. Here, at the hilltop, a particularly fat and black woodchuck harbored in the summer of 1940.

It is Charles Fellows, though, baiting his three cows up the road from the pasture on the right to the barn on the left, that is my most recurrent memory of the road. By five of summer evenings the patient beasts would be at the bars,

wishful of udders relieved of milk and of their snack of Hungarian millet. It was a chore congenial to the lessening vigor of old age, this walk, dog accompanied, down to the pasture, the lowering of the bars, the following of the cows in their leisurely progress to the barn. The brushed out roadsides bore a good stand of lush grass, and though the cows were anxious to be in barn, they could not resist dallying along. Long staff in hand, Charles would move slowly after them, half in trance sometimes with the witchery of the hour, the songs of hermit thrush and white-throat, the cries of the friendly swallows as they swooped down between the grey walls ahead of him.

Lost in old memories he would be at other times, of old times behind him, of his own people dead and gone. No other place had he ever called home or his father before him. Thence from his hilltop home that looked southeast to the Ossipees, south to the Belknaps, southwest to Kearsarge, north to "The Back Mountains," he had gone out for eighty years on all the errands of the farm. Eastward he had gone to Durgin's Mill across the covered wooden bridge at the hill's foot with wheat to be ground into flour. Westward he had gone Sunday on Sunday for long years to the White Church.

Thence he had gone courting, and marketing, and electioneering. Thence he had driven sheep and cattle, and started out with his threshing machine on a round of the farms westward. Thence he had gone with his mountain wagon to meet summer boarders at Centre Harbor, or West Ossipee. Here, after heavy snowfalls, he had goaded out his yoke of oxen to join with three other yokes of the neighbors to break the road. Hereabouts he had nutted from the oil nut trees, hereabouts he brought home syrup from the sapyards, hereabouts he had logged and cut cordwood and harvested apples. Along the road he had seen

deer run; and otters slither through the snow; and V's of wild geese cleave the leaden skies of November. Here he had rejoiced in the largess of choke-cherry bloom on White Sunday in May after May.

As I sit by the open fire in our house, our house that was built by Stephen Fellows in 1806, a pageant of the people who have passed here in the century and a half this has been white man's country takes shape and passes before me. Old Fellowses, old Tappans, old Hills, old Fosses; Gilmans and Folsoms, Durgins and Wallaces, Burnhams and Pierces and Atwoods; Quimbys troupe on troupe; Batchelders, Grays, and Corlisses; Grants and Perkinses and Bryars: scores on scores have passed here, afoot, on horseback, awheel, ox goad in hand, saddlebags before them, reins held loose or tight; and in latest years, hundreds in automobiles.

Many have stopped for business or gossip; there has been tall talk here, and altercations, haggling, bargaining, flirtations, all the issues of life and death. Funerals, auctions have been held here, pie-eating contests and corn huskings, barn raisings and cider making, triumphant bringings home of shot bear and moose. From the farms all sorts of the fruits of the earth have gone to store and fair. Early Red Astrakans have been traded in at Weed's Mills for the finest of corn meal. Wild strawberries have been swapped for barn door bolts. Prize pumpkins and pound and a half potatoes have gone to Sandwich Fair, and Dominiques and Dorkings of high degree.

Over this road meteors have hurtled, leaving in the wake thin streams of fire; auroras have played, flooding all the heavens with quivering light; triple rainbows have arched in skies in the quiet after thunder has died away; balls of fire have run along the telephone wires and shattered the clap-boards where they entered the houses. Here generations of

men have been quickened by the rose of dawn and known exaltation in the evening light. From here the pinnacle of Chocorua has stood out like a cone of snow in the moonlight. Here the brooding quiet of June dusk has been shattered to pieces by a wild cat's wail. Here a retriever pup has gamboled in careless abandon, happy in the cool of the morning and in the company of his loved folks.

It has been given to me to know this road over Fellows Hill for but half the year. I have not seen November here, or December, or January or February, or March or April. I know it from mid-May, when "the plums are just blown and the apples in red bud," until mid-October "when the tops of the back mountains are white with snow." I have seen the green fire of spring creeping over the hardwood forests; the apple trees that grow up everywhere laden with pink bloom bitten out against the dark green of spruce and pine; the lush foliage of early June aswish in the southwest wind; basswood trees mantled in fragrant blossoms of gold green, the whole tree, leaves and flowers alike quivering with the wingbeats of thousands of bees. I have known midsummer here, midsummer into which the spring delays, with April-like air and hyla voices; August with its goldenrod and blue asters; September with the red maples burning shafts of scarlet and saffron and the birches yellow gold; September's end and the first fortnight of October a wild revel of vivid reds until a northeaster from the Atlantic strips them bare.

Maybe in the fulness of time I shall know here the harder half of the year. My kindly neighbors do not, however, wish it for me, now grown old. They say there are compensations for the dire cold, the half imprisonment that snows five feet deep on the level bring, the difficulty of getting about, the loneliness and the wildness. There is the road, its snow cut to pieces by deer tracks, flocks of winter robins or grosbeaks

on the high bush cranberry, snowy owls like ghosts drifting through the twilight, all the world of snow rose flushed at dawn and royal purple at sunset, or flashing silver in the moonlight. So one enumerates a few of the compensations.

Another speaks of the snugness of indoors with harsh chunks of rock maple and beech in the furnace, chunks that last through the longest winter night, and all three fireplaces and the kitchen stove high piled with glowing hardwood coals. Such folks have known a hearty joy in gritty snow and in hail beating on the windows, double, of course, against a habitual forty below, or in cold rain shafting down on the staunch house and setting it drumming with tattoo upon tattoo. The cellar windows are deep banked with sawdust, the henhouses high piled with corn stalks; the woodshed with twenty cords of wood and a barn bay with twenty more; horse and cow in tight box-stalls under scaffolds deep with hay.

It is Florida the neighbors wish for our winters in old age, but it might be that the hilltop in Sandwich is what is ahead of us. They plow out the roads now, and the outside world comes in by mail and telephone and radio. There is a good doctor within two miles and helpful neighbors within call. Here, in old times, when the town had thirty-six hundred permanent residents instead of its present eight hundred, there was a rich and contented life through all the seasons. It is natural for the old to hope that what has been may be again. If the worst should come to the worst one could raise on this so fertile soil the food to keep his family going. And, as I say in moments of pessimism, one place is as good as another from which to watch "the vehement drift of man's herd to hell."

There presides, however, over all Fellows Hill, the memory of the last Fellows to live here, Charles Rodney Fellows. His philosophy of a life was that of a genial stoic. It

found expression in that maxim he repeated again and again in the words: "Ah me! We shall have to take it as it comes." That was said with a half sigh, but there was every evidence of something more than resignation a moment later, as there followed a cheery smile and a brave fronting of whatever chanced to come. High heart he had in most moments. I have been with him in moments of bitter disappointment, in the failure of the Republican party to which he had been loyal all his life to renominate him for the lower house at Concord. I have been with him in moments of sorrow over the death of those dear to him. I have been with him in moments in which he did not see how he was to meet old age and privation closing in on him.

Never, though, did I know him to falter, save for the moment, in his "high task of happiness." After a disappointing auction of his household gear after he had sold his home, he was just camping out on an old couch there. He was to leave on the morrow. Here he had been born, remember, and his father before him, and his son after him. Here his grandchildren had lived, and his grandfather, five generations of Fellowses. Now he was leaving it all, with no certainty as to where would be his home for what few years remained to him. Cheerful he was, though, of firm hand grasp despite his nearly ninety years, with all the cordiality and good neighborliness that had won me from the moment we came to summer next door to him. In that cold, dismantled house he gave me the tin horn that had called in to dinner generations of his people. There was never any let-up in his generosity, his friendliness, his loyalty. My last words with him, when I said good-bye to him, feeble and ill, as we were leaving Sandwich in the fall before what was to be his last winter, were good wishes for each one of the four of us for whom he had made possible many glad summers on Fellows Hill. Though we have to own with



Wordsworth, that much it grieves our hearts to think "what man has made of man," we, having known such a man, have had our faith re-established in human loyalty. As Marty South said of Winterborne, he was a good man and did good things.

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## Rhoda Never Would Back

[for ABBY COTTON LANG]

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RHODA was loath to do what those who owned her wanted her to do," said the lady at the auction. "What she wanted to do it was hard to find out, but what she was certain she would not do was back. The only reason the folks kept her was that she was strong to pull when she had a mind to. Get her away from home hitched up with another horse would drag her along she put her strength on a load of logs, or whatever was to be pulled, once she was headed back for corn and oats. It was a mite trying, though, to have trouble with her nine times out of ten when you had work for her. So one fall, when she was getting old, and was sleek and fat from much feeding and little labor, the folks took the notion to kill her for the winter's meat. She was soon salt pork and dried beef and smoked venison.

A guest was given a choice cut from Rhoda toasted nicely on a fork held above a bed of coals in the open fireplace. This all happened back a hundred years ago long before there were stoves in this country. He liked his meat so much he inquired what it was, saying he had never had so tasty a steak or one broiled to so nice a turn. The brother

of the host, who was a bit of an innocent, blurted out it was a steak from the old mare.

His stomach completely upset at the idea of eating horse meat, the guest rushed out of the house, but he could not get rid of Rhoda. The innocent rushed out after him, crying: "No use, mister, no use! Rhoda never would back when she was alive, and you cannot expect her to now she's dead."

# The Last Minutes of Onesiphorus Morse

[for W. POPE BARNEY]

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ONESIPHORUS MORSE was having a bad turn from heart trouble. It had been six weeks since he had given up going down cellar for potatoes, his last attempt having made him, as his wife said, "pant like a dog." Now, as the doctor sat by his chair, his hand on the wrist of the old man, and where his face was out of sight from Onesiphorus, he gave his head the slightest shake, and frowned, to indicate, he said afterwards, that he could hardly feel the pulse beat. Though Onesiphorus was *in extremis*, he would not go to bed. He had never gone to bed for illness in all his ninety-one years, and he said he never would. He insisted on telling the doctor, who was as enthusiastic a hunter and fisher as Onesiphorus himself, about a great day in his life fifty years before.

"Yes, Zekel Evans was a good man to go fishing with, a good neighbor, a good Christian as long as he did not go beyond one mug of hard cider. We went down along to the pond that day and caught sixty fish between us, mostly perch and pickerel. Everything went well until we were near home, climbing up hill from Cheever. Zekel, unfortunately, insisted on stopping in at John Moore's. Now John would give Zekel, or anybody else for that matter, as

much cider as he wanted. John knew, too, just as well as I did, that Zekel would be hot as a mink after the second mug. He was worse than that right away after the third.

"I did my best to hold him to the one mug, but he said he would not have any Morse tell an Evans how much he should drink. I held myself to two mugs, as much as I could carry well unless I had a good meal in me just eaten. I had to help Zekel home. I had to put him to bed, for his wife wouldn't touch him, and he wouldn't have let her had she been willing to. I had to milk his three cows for him and do all his chores. That being the way things were I thought it was right I had the first choice of the fish. I took but twenty, but they were good ones, you may be sure of that. Do you know all the fishing we did that day came back to him clear as could be next day when he was sobered up? He was just as spleeny when he was himself as he was when he wasn't. He brooded over his wrongs, as he called them, so long before he spoke to me about the division of the fish that we had them all ate by when he got round to complaining. Ah! that was a good day, good fishing, Zekel done by his own fault, good neighboring by me, good fried fish for supper!" He chuckled as he savored the recollection. That chuckling, after the strain of finding the voice to tell the story, was too much for him. His heart stopped. Onesiphorus had had a good death.

# “My God Is Not Man”

[for ALLAN G. CHESTER]

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**H**E was well along in the late seventies when his spleen against humanity expressed itself in the words he had cut on his tombstone. Those words were “MY GOD IS NOT MAN.” He had long been considering where he would be buried and how he would be buried. He did not think he had been duly appreciated by his family so he would not be buried in the Tench family burying ground, along with his father and grandfather and great grandfather. The last was the progenitor of the family in these parts, a settler from southern New Hampshire who had worked his way up to an interval in the shadow of Mt. Washington. There, too, in the family graveyard, Asaph would be but one of many. It was better he be buried alone.

The death of his wife changed his plans somewhat. He had always believed that he would go first, as, he said, most men go. He had long had his coffin made, a staunch coffin of red cedar, the wood for which he imported from down country and had shaped up by the best cabinet maker in town, and a man that was as near to a friend as such a man as he could have. He was very proud of his coffin. He kept it in the woodshed between his house and barn, and when he

was properly warmed up with hard cider he would crawl into it to show callers how neat a fit it was.

He farmed it in a small way, but his first interests in life were books and fox hunting. He owned some books but his reliance for reading was the libraries of his sparse town and its more fully settled neighbor. Both towns had good libraries, memorial libraries given by men who had gone out from these towns in youth and prospered in cities. There is scarcely a village in all New Hampshire that cannot boast such a foundation. Books had come to him from his people and he had picked up others at country auctions. The minister of the nearby Congregational Church had lent Asaph many volumes, too, before controversies between them had made further borrowings and lendings impossible. He was well read.

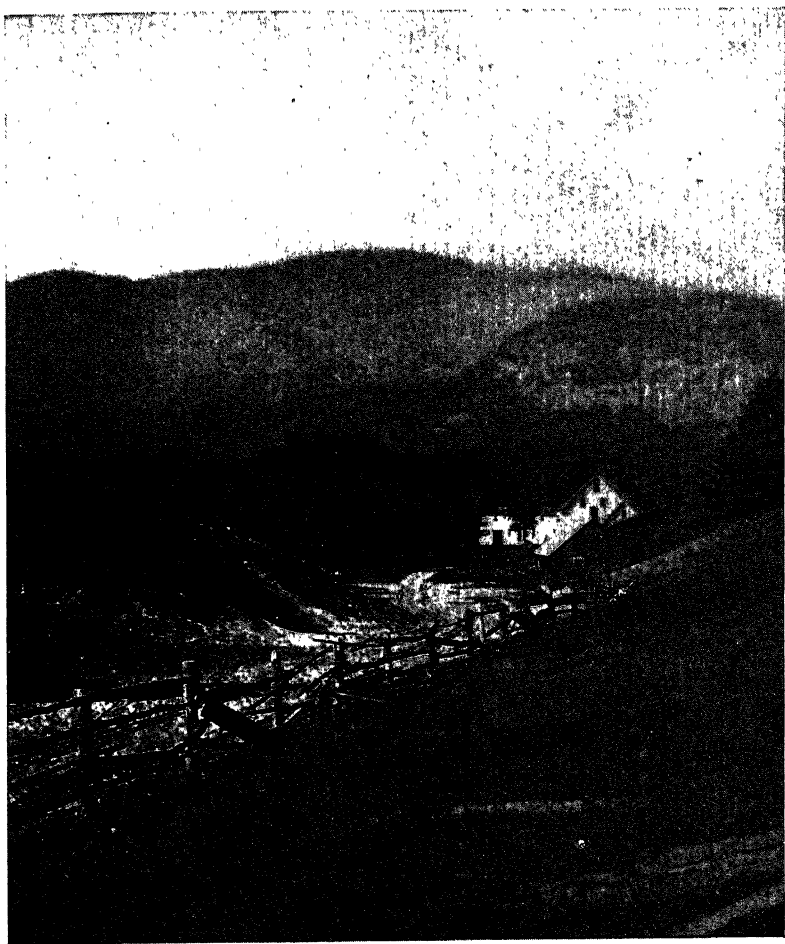
There was nothing exclusive in his reading. He would quote you indifferently Euripides or Goethe, the Bible or Tom Paine. Just where he found the phrase he had carved on that slab of marble set into the block of granite at the head of his grave I have not been able to discover. It is very close to a dozen passages in the Bible and equally close to a score of others from the sages down the centuries. Nor is it easy to account for his contempt of humanity. He had been in disagreement with his neighbors and with the town authorities, but he had been treated with kindness by many, a kindness beyond his deserts. He had had great happiness in fox hunting and in the reputation he had as a dead shot. He had not been happy in his marriage. It was reported he did not treat his wife well. He had looked with favor on other women who, despite his bad name in the town, had found him a man they could not help loving.

His nearest neighbor was fully a quarter of a mile away, uphill from him, and cut off by the brush that was growing up where only a cellar hole marked the site of a prosperous

farm. A road ran in between Tench's place and this deserted place, a road on which there had once been five homes in the two miles through to another still travelled road. They were all abandoned now. Tench knew this uncared for road was still a right of way by which folks with claims on the deserted places went in to cut hay and wood. He objected to the use of the road and built fences across it. The selectmen came and cut the fences down. Tench put them up again. The selectmen cut them out again. So it went on, the selectmen exercising admirable patience with Tench, largely because his relatives had been and were of consideration in the town. In fact one of the selectmen was an own cousin. Tench grew angrier and angrier and finally he shot at the selectmen as they cut out his fences. It is a stock story in the countryside he shot off the hats of two of the men without hurting a hair on their heads, and a heel off the high boots of the third.

Even for this he was not punished. He was just arrested and bound over to keep the peace. Nor was he arrested for his association with the victim of a famous murder case. A girl he was going with brought suit for breach of promise, it was said at his suggestion, against a married man of the neighborhood. This man, happy in his marriage, saw the case going against him. He feared his farm would go to pay the damages to be assessed him. In blind rage and despair he jumped out on the girl who had been his sweetheart, as she was driving along in her buggy. She was found in a deep pool of the Andoscoggin, the buggy on top of her. The horse with the traces loose from their fastenings made his way home. It was this circumstance that made people think a crime had been committed. If it had been an accident the horse, too, would have gone over the precipice into the river. The man who was on trial for breach of promise was notoriously fond of animals. It was believed





WHITE HORSE LEDGE TOWARD NORTH CONWAY



he could not bear to drive the horse over the cliff. Just how he managed to save the beast and throw the girl and buggy off the road nobody could explain, unless he deliberately unhitched the roan, and then slugged the girl and tossed her unconscious into the river and pushed the buggy after her.

The tragic affair seemed to have no effect on Tench, though, unless he had urged the girl to sue, there had not been the two deaths, the girl drowned and her one time lover hanged by the neck until he was dead. Tench went on unconcernedly following his two master passions, reading and fox hunting. The neighbors could not follow his reading in his little house, but he could not conceal his shooting of foxes. He did not, perhaps, wish to conceal it. There are still, sixty years after his death at eighty odd, stories told in the neighborhood of his uncanny skill in shooting the beasts. One day as he was passing a distant neighbor's he stopped for a chat, or what was more likely, a bit of controversy. Customs were sacred, though, and he, as the stranger within the gates, was asked in to dinner.

"Give me a half hour," he said. "There is a fox up there on the mountain, sleeping on a ledge in the sun. I should like to get him first. He may not be there after dinner." So he went off, carrying the gun and spy glass that always accompanied him. In about ten minutes they heard a shot and, at exactly the half hour's end, Tench returned with a fox skin. He never brought in the beast in the flesh but always skinned it as soon as he killed it. He never used a dog. If his knowledge of the fox's ways did not suffice to enable him to stalk it or to know where it would round on its way back to its hole, or its form, he would send a boy in after it to start it up. He would know where to wait for it and shoot it as it loped by. The characteristic pose of Tench as it is remembered by the few now alive who knew him is a little man in snuff colored shirt and trousers

of like color tucked into his boots and held up by patched galluses, standing in a piece of road with a view round, spy glass to his eye, looking for foxes.

He was very fixed in his opinions and given to sweeping statements that, in his view, settled all things celestial and mundane. Having no children to contradict him his wrath would be great when his nieces would meet his forthright declarations with: "Yes, Uncle, in your opinion." His wrath boiling over he would retort: "Opinions! What I say is fact!" Those are sayings in that lonely interval now: "Yes, Uncle, in your opinion," and "What I say is fact!"

Towards the end of his life he grew more peculiar year by year. He was plagued by the boys who every July stole the barrel of pitch he kept in his shed to patch up the walk about his grave mound. It helped wonderfully with the flames that went up from the great pile of barrels they fired on the Fourth of July down on the parade. He took to sleeping in his coffin, which he kept in the shed, on mild nights, and in the granite sarcophagus in the vault when it was warm and dry. He began to be afraid of strangers after the death of his wife. When he saw one he could not identify coming up the walk to his door he would run into the house, jump into his bed and pull the clothes up over his head. If you pursued him into the house and called to him and he recognized your voice he would crawl out, invite you to be seated, and seat himself in a chair with his back toward you. If you moved your chair so that you faced him he would promptly reverse his chair again so that his back was again presented to you.

It was in his seventies, as I have said, had come the great achievement of his life, the building of his burial mound and vault and the setting up of the headstone that was to distinguish his resting place from that of all other men. He chose a spot at the very end of his little farm, where it

terminated on the highway that had been a post road from the earliest times. His own house was a quarter of a mile back from this much travelled road, on a side road, and out of sight from the highway. He who in life was known only in his own neighborhood was in death to be known of all the world that visited "The White Mountains." He was years about his task, or labor of love, as you choose to call it. It was with infinite energy he built here a vault of granite, with a sarcophagus of granite that occupied half of the floor of the vault. He roofed over the vault with six slabs of granite each eight feet long and a foot and a half wide. About the outer walls of this vault, and up against its covering slabs, he piled a mound of gravel and earth eight feet high and twenty feet square at the base. The mound was of glacial gravel covered with top soil and sodded. It did not wear away with the winter's heaving of frost. When it had settled as much as it would he built a fence about the vault twelve feet square. Its eight heavy granite posts had three iron rods fastened into them, after the traditional fashion of cemetery plots.

In the western corner a boulder of red granite thirty inches square and as high above the ground, had set into it a marble block with rounded top, eighteen inches high, eighteen inches across and ten inches through, with 1872 carved at the top and MY GOD IS NOT MAN set out on it:

1872  
MY GOD  
IS NOT  
MAN

Here he had intended to lie in solitary glory, but when his wife died, as he had not anticipated, before him, he had been forced by family and neighborhood opinion, to have

her buried there. On her plain granite tombstone, side by side with that he had erected for himself three years before, he put the legend "Alzira B. Tench, 1807-1873." Already he had planted a white pine at the southern corner of the mound and a ground juniper at the northern corner. At his death in 1880 he was interred here in the coffin so long made, in the sarcophagus cut out of the hard granite he had had prepared to receive that coffin. Ironically, his eastward facing tombstone is now beheld by few passersby. They straightened the old post road in automobile days and the little burial mound was left on a disused curve barred off from travel by great boulders at both the ends at which it touches the new highway. The lichened granite, and the few sprays of late golden rod growing between the covering slabs, are in a lonely spot unfrequented by man, though no more than a hundred yards back from Route Blank with its heavy traffic of honking cars. He is defeated in the post mortuary celebrity he sought. Again and again he had said: "Every nobody that dies has his name on his tombstone, and every nobody man alive that passes gives no thought to who lies there. If, however, you put no name on a tombstone, and an inscription that sets men talking, people will know who lies there. There will be wonder, and the man will not be forgotten." Was he right after all? I think not, for I have so concealed his place of burial and his identity that the few who might be interested by my writing to make pilgrimage to this lonely mound cannot find it. Only those of his immediate neighborhood who know his story will identify the protagonist of my tale. It is only the foxes whose kin he decimated that pass now that lonely sepulchre with its legend so designedly provocative. There is no one to be shocked or made curious by MY GOD IS NOT MAN.

That legend had its effect on the consideration in which

he was held when he died. Men, as represented by his neighbors, stayed away from his funeral. Only the undertaker's men, and the minister, and the neighbor who sent him in meals towards the end of his life and agreed, as executor of his infinitesimal estate, to see that his will was done after his death, attended his funeral. Only these and one other neighbor who thought it too bad that only these few should go to a man's funeral. When he was asked why he went, he said he thought one at least of those at the services should be there for other than business reasons. "Besides," he said, "Asaph Tench wasn't as mean all of the time as he was most of the time." And that epitaph spoken over him has more currency today than the bitter words on his tombstone. The ironies will be served.

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## Toward Contentment

[for GEORGE W. MC CLELLAND]

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IT is the little things that most delight us. We treasure in memory what larger moments life has brought us, the first awakening of love light in a girl's eyes, the first cry of our first born child, the acknowledgment by our peers of work well done, the response of an audience of thousands to the power of the spoken word, the fall of sound in a sentence of just balance and inevitability of phrase, the discovery of a reading of life unfound before we found it. Such experiences are not, however, part of the daily round. We are glad they are not, for they would keep life keyed at too high a pitch for human comfort. The quieter joys have in them more of content.

There are on the chairs about my desk and leaning against the wall seven simple objects of yesterday, only one of which, a great pair of iron calipers, has much pretention to beauty. Its two arms taper like the blade of an old reaping hook to delicate points, bowing out and in to measure, perhaps, the thickness of a log. They suggest the timber woods of old time, men skilled in axe craft, belled logging teams, and the deep snow of mid-winter on the slopes of the Sandwiches. The candlestick of old tin, wide, high rimmed, with a holder no more than four inches high, takes me to



attics a hundred years ago, and children being tucked into a trundle bed, with a bearskin thrown over the foot, to be pulled up if the woollen coverlets are not proof against forty below zero outside and a gale storming by.

The great hand auger, that bores out a hole an inch and a half in diameter, comes, probably, from a little to the southward, for its handle bar is oak, a rare wood with us in our neighborhood save for a stand of red oak on Israel Mountain. It brings back barn raisings, gone now for three-quarters of a century, but not forgotten by our oldest oldsters as festivals when rum ran like water. Some say the spit was slung by tackle, now lost, from the crane in the fireplace, and others that it turned in a tin oven you sat on the hearth, its open side facing the red hot coals. I incline to the latter view, though the nineteen inch tapering bar of iron is wrought and of very primitive order. The spit has four holes in it for the insertion of iron skewers. Its sharp point would enable you to thrust it through a long round of beef, a sirloin say, with the bone taken out, and the skewers would hold the precious meat in place as it was turned in its resting place. Need I speak of how cheery this room in which I write would be of a winter's day towards fall of night, the sliding shutters pulled out of the wall and drawn across the windows to turn back the cold, a chimney place full of glowing coals of rock maple or beech, and the smell and sizzle of the joint on the spit. One wonders did they have a gear from the old dog on a treadmill to turn the spit? More likely, perhaps, that one child after another took a twenty-five turns, with Spot on the hearth and his mouth slavering in anticipation of tidbits when the joint was served. Mother certainly took things in hand for the final basting and browning.

The ice pick should be called by some other name lest it be confounded with that deadly little weapon of 1830-

1930 that the electric refrigerator with its ice making device is sending into desuetude. The ice pick I refer to is almost of the proportions of a fireman's axe, with point for driving into the cakes to pull them about and narrow blade for splitting them. It takes us to frozen ponds and lakes, fishing through the ice, cusk and pike flopping about dangerously near the holes through which they were drawn, men and boys with ear muffs of ermine and red scarfs twisted around their necks, great fires on the ice and moonlight and killing cold.

The tongue pin, with half moon top, recalls my neighbor's story of how the witch of Weare made the tongue pin of his great grandfather's ox team pop out every time the team got under way. It is a pin of iron an inch in diameter and six inches long, with a half moon of similar iron welded at its middle to the pin. The witch of Weare was seventy-five miles away, but so great was her power over iron that distance was easily overcome. Perhaps the half moon of this pin would have prevented such procedure. There is strange virtue in half moons, as in stars and crescents and other celestial emblems.

The tunnel is made from a sap bucket with an inch and a half round of white pine hollowed out and driven through the centre of its bottom. It brings back to me sapping, the mating of the pileated woodpeckers, the melting of snow, the blue bird's warble, the pewee's drawl, all the heart stabbing sweetness and freshness of spring. It brings back fall, too, for it was doubtless used for putting cider into great hogsheads. You can hear the amber liquid clucking down into the vivifying wood of the keg, have you any imagination at all. If you have not imagination, you can make nothing of these seven objects of mine. They will be just old junk to you. You will not even wonder how they chanced to be seven.



CHOCORUA  
*by Timothy Cole*



It isn't Brian O'Lynn only finds luck in odd numbers. Man has long been sure of the virtues of seven and thirteen. It was not by design I bought these seven bits of junk at an antique shop. I was interested in each one for what were its associations, for what it symbolized. It was not the first time I found such purchases totalled at seven. Seven and thirteen are the two numbers that have played the largest part in my life. I was born on the thirteenth of December, my son on the thirteenth of August, and most of the men folk of my father's people for the two hundred years we have detailed knowledge of them on that same fortunate day of the month. Friday, too, has been a lucky day for me. Friday, thirteen and seven have all been of good omen to me and mine. I am not superstitious about them. So far as I know my only superstition is a fear of having boasted about the health of the family. I do not like to hear myself say: "None of us has been sick this winter." All that the finding my purchases are seven does to me is to fill me with a mild content.

It chances, too, there is iron in all the seven items. The calipers, spit, and tongue pin are all iron. The candlestick is iron tinned. The auger and ice pick are of iron with wooden handles, and the sap bucket from which the tunnel is made is bound with iron hoops. I would not go so far as to say with my neighbor that "we are led in such matters." All I say is that the seven objects are no less pleasant symbols because they are seven, and that there is no less joy in them in that all have iron in their make-up. Best of all about them, though, is that America of yesterday they restore to me. One and all they call to contentment.

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## Shakespeare Is Her Only Friend

[for HELEN and FRANK AIKEN]

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SHE was talked of in her youth for her knowledge of Shakespeare and her lapsing stockings. Stockings unsmooth on shapely legs, it has been handed down to us from the fathers, are a cardinal sin in woman. Almira was very guilty of this sin. Her stockings were sometimes down about her ankles. All she lived for was her reading. She just put up with what few relatives, all old folks, she had, and what younger folks she knew from her school and academy days. All the companionship she craved was a listener to her reading from Shakespeare. That she was a lady there was no doubt. She had the voice and the manners and the bearing, despite wrinkled and slipping stockings, of one to the manor born. She had not the rigid regimen of life, of dress or duties, that are supposed to be the insignia of her casté. She would not labor to be beautiful, as all ladies must, no matter how large their share of beauty.

As the years went on, her relatives died, her girlhood's friends dropped off, and her lack of interest in her house-keeping made it impossible for her to keep a girl. In the end the only one she had to read Shakespeare to was Runnells Ladd, her hired man. He did not care what disorder the house was in. She let him have a whole day off each week to

go fishing, she paid him well, and she demanded little work of him. The neighbors said he was paid thirty dollars a month with board and no washing to listen to Almira read Shakespeare. It was doubted he really listened to her reading. He just accepted it passively and thought and thought about pike and perch, lake trout and land locked salmon. That at least was how the neighbors diagnosed his expression as he sawed wood to her monotonous chanting. They could hear some of her recitation, and the minister, passing by the house on summer evenings when the front door was open identified "The Seven Ages of Man," the dagger speech of Lady Macbeth, and the balcony scene from *Romeo and Juliet*. She followed Runnells wherever he went on the few chores he had to do, carrying the heavy tome edited by George Stevens, Esq., about with her.

It is said their betrothal came while she read him *Hamlet* as he milked the cow. He did what housework was done after they were married, but he did not cook well enough, village gossip said, to keep himself alive. They took him away to the hospital to die, but she would not believe he was dead. They had a hard time making her pay his funeral expenses, for she insisted he was not dead. Eccentric she had always been, but her continuing her practice of reading aloud as if he were still present was the first hint of any obsession. The neighbors, some of them, wanted her sent to the state hospital after this development, and because of their fear she would set fire to her house in her indifference, and endanger the village. The doctor would not be a party to this suggestion, saying she was only abstracted, and with this one harmless delusion, and not legally deranged.

So they had a guardian appointed for her, a man who had gone to school with her. He spent a reasonable amount of her money in making her house habitable and comfortable, and found a woman who was willing to look after her. With

no regard for her health for years she is marvelously preserved at sixty, with a skin like a girl's, and a pleasant smile for all who intrude upon her. Though she receives graciously those few who insist on calling upon her, they come away with the feeling they have been intruders. Fortunately the house of the village farm on which she lives is far enough away from her neighbors for them to be little troubled by her reading aloud. It is hardly reading now, as a matter of fact, but recitation. She has pored over the plays so much these forty years she has them all by heart. Hers is a long lived stock, and she may well have thirty years of Shakespeare still before her. The sounding of his lines in her ears, and the visualization of his characters, perhaps, and of the scenes from their lives, is all she needs for contentment. Nothing else matters. She knows nothing of village gossip or the world's affairs. One wonders is there in all the earth another who so cares for Shakespeare, whether scholar, or actor, or devoted reader?

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## Circlets of Bright Hair

[for EARL LESLIE GRIGGS]

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THE circlets are not like the ring of a woman's hair about the finger bone of her lover found in a graveyard of Old England. The Dean of St. Paul's might, indeed, be less pleased with these cut from the polls of living young folk in New England and fashioned into memorabilia. The circlets are in two autograph albums picked up at Hill on the Pemigewasset. They are of various designs, some a single round a half inch in diameter, others rounded into a circlet of circlets, thirteen in all in two instances, one in either book. The designs, presumably in the hair of the person whose name is subscribed or superscribed, are for the most part fastened to the pages of the book by red sealing wax, but some are held in place by the gummed paper of hearts or other emblems that are a part of the elaborated signatures.

The hair of the circlets is from a thirty-second to a sixteenth of an inch across, flat, and preserved, after a hundred years, as only hair of all flesh and bone and other human substance is preserved. Both albums are from the Connecticut Valley, the one from east of the river, from Claremont in New Hampshire, and the other, judging by the place recorded under most of the signatures, from

South Strafford, to the west of the river, in Orange County, Vermont. There are several signatures in the Vermont book from a Lowell, but whether from the town of that name far north in the state, near the Canadian border, or the Lowell in Massachusetts all the world knows, there is no evidence to determine. I incline rather to the Massachusetts city, to which upcountry girls and boys were already gravitating by 1837, drawn by the mills of that industrial community.

This South Strafford book was the property of Miss Eliza Adaline Wiley, and the Claremont book that of Miss Ruth H. Dustin. Most of the entries in Miss Wiley's book are of 1834. The two that are dated in Miss Dustin's book are of 1837 and 1838. In both books there are verses of appropriate sentiments signed in the approved fashion of latter day autograph albums. In Miss Dustin's book, either she, or some other woman of the days before the Civil War, has copied sayings in both verse and prose that appealed to her. The scriptor tired in "The graves of a household." The hand in which the lines are traced is a bit trembly, as if they were the work of one of advanced years. Since these two books, and one of forty years later, were found together in Orange County, Vermont, it may be that Miss Dustin married into the Wiley family and moved to Vermont. Perhaps both ladies are forbears of the "Mary" of the third autograph album. This third book is of the sort I was familiar with in my youth. It is without any distinctive quality, save that most of the signatures in it seem to have been entered after "Mary's" death. The book functioned chiefly, I take it, as a memorial to "Mary," and as a comfort to her family. A Susan M. Wiley, of Rochester, Vermont, signs her name in this book of the family, perhaps of Eliza Adaline of South Strafford.

These are the verses of "The Graves of a Household" as far as set down in Miss Dustin's book:

They grew in beauty side by side;  
They filled one house with glee;  
Their graves are severed far and wide  
By mount and stream and sea.

The same fond mother bent at night  
O'er each fond sleeping brow.  
She had each folded flower in sight.  
Where are those dreamers now?

One mid the forest of the west,  
By a dark stream is laid.  
The Indian knew his resting place,  
Far in the cedar shade.

The sea, the blue lone sea hath one,  
He lies where pearls lie deep  
He was the loved of all, but none  
O'er his low bed may weep.

And one, o'er her the myrtle showers  
Its leaves, by soft winds fanned;  
She perished mid Italian flowers,  
The last of that bright band.

And parted thus they rest who played.—

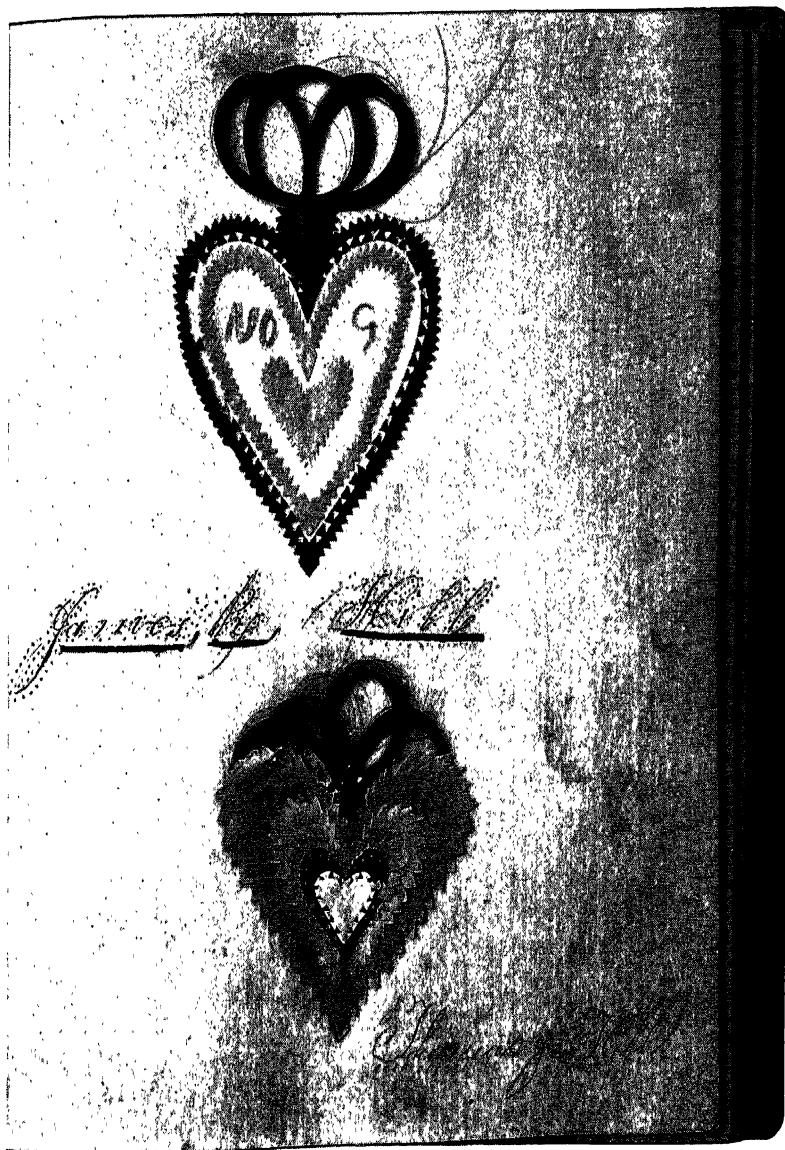
And there the copyist left off. Was it a case of writing down verses preserved in the memory, and of the memory breaking down?

There are sixty-six pages in Miss Dustin's book, which is a little more than five inches tall and a little more than four inches broad. It is a little less than half an inch thick. About half of its pages are embellished with the emblems in hair and with verses or quasi-philosophical questions and answers in prose. It is of marbled covers and its back is black with gilt stripes. Like so many old books of all sorts

it has been a plaything of a child. This J. D. Wilson pasted a piece of paper with his name across it over the "Miss Ruth Dustin, Claremont, N. H.," with which the presenter of the book to that young lady had inscribed the first page with scrolled addenda such as were common in goose quill days. Above this inscription, which seems to be in pencil, there is twice written, in differing hands, and with a pen, "Ruth H. Dustin," also with decorative addenda of modest sort. There are five floral decorations in pencil in the little book, "writing and drawing teacher" style, two of them the very spray of flower and fruit of pomegranate one finds on china from Staffordshire in England and on fractur from Pennsylvania.

There are twenty-one designs in hair in the album. They are of Don Alonzo Clay, Clarissa S. Dustin, Phinette H. Tibbils, Silas B. Ellis, James J. Ellis, Stephen Robbins, Lorindena, Benjamin D. Howe, James R. Hill, Theresia J. Hill, Eldridge G. Locke, Martha A. Howard, Sarah M. Brown, Mahum Wilson, Sarah M. Ellis, Ellin Robbins, Emeline Fish, Hannah Rice, Friend Martha Holton, Ariel K. Richardson, Nancy J. Richardson and L. S. Holton. One wonders were they all fellow students at some academy? The Holtons alone put a place name under their signature, "L. S." writing his on September 24, 1837 and "Friend Martha" hers on March 18, 1838, both at Northfield. There was no school at the time in New Hampshire's Northfield, over the river from Sandbornton Bridge, now Tilton, so if these signatories chanced to be at one of the old academies together it may have been at Northfield way up in Washington County, Vermont, or in Northfield in Massachusetts, made famous by Dwight L. Moody, of the Moody and Sankey duo.

A question that presents itself on the opening of Miss Dustin's album is: How were the circlets rounded into the



MEMORABILIA AND KEEPSAKES OF HAIR



designs in which we find them? My guess is that the girl secured the signatures when she begged the locks of hair, and wove them into the designs at her leisure, spending infinite pains over the cut-outs of colored paper she pasted in or waxed in to hold them in place. There are verses in Miss Wiley's book that seem to reveal the sending around from Dan to Beersheba of the autograph album. The first design in Miss Dustin's book, that of Don Alonzo Clay, is of the simplest sort. Under the floral display in pencil across the top of the page Don Alonzo's hair is woven into two lobes with a dip at the top, roughly after the shape of a heart, and is fastened in with a smaller heart in red paper, the two hearts being held in place with a dab of sealing wax. The circlet of hair, heartshaped, of Silas B. Ellis is also simple, as is that of James J. Ellis. Simpler yet is the single circlet of Stephen Robbins. Benjamin D. Howe has his arranged in the trilobed effect of clover, and James R. Hill and Theresia J. Hill have the three lobes in the form of a circle superimposed on a heart. These three lobed effects are commonest of all in the book.

Nearly always the circlets of hair are placed above the paper hearts that hold them in, but in the design of Ellin Robbins there is a two-lobed arrangement to the left of the diamond of notched paper in green and salmon and red and pink. Sarah M. Brown is also represented by a diamond of notched paper in pink and brown and green and red, with circlets of red hair at the points of the diamond. The right hand circlet is gone, the only one lost in the whole book. That is a remarkable circumstance when you realize that J. D. Wilson had played with it, numbering the circlets in a schoolboyish hand. Miss Brown is No. 13. You can plainly see, from the raised point of the diamond and from the stain on the paper, where the lost circlet rested.

The most elaborate arrangements are all of girls' hair,

and all the boys' emblems are simply done, which might seem to lend argument to the emblems being made by those who signed their names below them. The skill with which most of the circlets are woven would, on the other hand, point to one artist alone being responsible for them. The most elaborate circlet in Miss Dustin's book has lost its covering cut-out in paper, disclosing that a thread around the wreath of thirteen circlets of hair of Friend Martha Holton has been waxed with red sealing wax to hold it firmly in place. The similar wreath of thirteen lobes in Miss Wiley's book is signed "L.E.M.," South Strafford, March 30, 1834. L.E.M. subscribes her initials and thirteen lobed circlets of hair to these verses:

May heavenly wisdom us direct,  
And to her voice may we incline.  
May God's own strength our lives protect,  
And beauty fair adorn our mind.

In another hand than "L.E.M.'s" but signed "L.E.M.," there appears on the succeeding page, dedicated to Mrs. Adaline Austin, a couplet reading:

When this you see  
Think of rattleheaded me.

We may safely assume, I think, that we see in Mrs. Adaline Austin the erstwhile Miss Eliza Adaline Wiley. We may also assume, I believe, that somebody did not lose a chance to pay off some old score against "L.E.M." Perhaps, though, he just felt spleeny, as they say in Gilford.

The quasi-philosophical reflections found toward the end of Miss Dustin's book in the trembling hand of age are of better sort than most album entries. They are in prose. One I have copied out is: "Extensive prospects are seen through small openings." A question and answer are:



"Which would you choose, a Rake or a Fool?"

"I would choose neither, but of the two evils I would choose the former. Habit may be changed, nature cannot." Another of the sort is:

"What is the most beautiful color in nature?"

"That, now almost out of nature, the blush of modesty." The world was evidently going to the dogs as surely in old times as it is today.

One "G.E.W.," who writes in pencil and is represented by no circlet, indites this comforting quatrain toward the end of the book:

The flower that blooms the brightest  
Is doomed the first to fade.  
The form that moves the lightest  
In earth is soonest laid.

There is, however, less lugubriousness in these old albums than in that of the late eighteen seventies and early eighteen eighties.

Miss Wiley's book is homemade. It is a little more than eight inches high and a little more than five inches wide. It is covered with a heavy glazed paper. It was once of twenty-four pages but five have been cut out. Perhaps some of the sentiments expressed were irritating in certain eyes in later years. The book was designedly made gay and beautiful by the inclusion of pages of pink paper and yellow paper among the usual inviolate white. It is given to Fanny Townshend, who is represented by a nine lobed emblem of her hair in horseshoe shape, to attain the highest flights of anyone recording sentiments in the album. She writes above date of South Strafford, 1834:

#### ON FRIENDSHIP

Friendship is a flower that the devastating hand of Time cannot crush, nor the lightnings scathe. It rears its beautiful head in the

morning of prosperity, and expands and blooms, and casts its nectarious odour on the feeling heart—and when the night of adversity sets in, and its chilling withering dews fall upon its flexible leaves and humble stalk, it is not seen to sink beneath the oppressive load, but, like the mellifluous rose raising itself with its weight of gems to kiss the Orient's beams, it springs into a new existence and its beauty and its fragrance impart a charm to all around.

Miss Townshend had not studied rhetoric and belles lettres in vain.

At Lowell, where perhaps Miss Wiley was visiting in August of 1835, Miss Jennett Flanders of Bradford, N.H., wrote:

What a changing, dying world is this! How does every relict of departed joy whisper to my soul: This is not our resting place. On every side we daily behold memorials of departed friends. They loudly speak the vanity of earthly pursuits and comfort, and bid us lay up our treasures in Heaven. Oh, my friend E, may it be your chief concern here below, that you are prepared to exchange this sinful world for those blissful mansions above, at the hour when it may please Almight God to call you, as the time of our departure is known to him alone.

It is perhaps Miss Eliza Adaline herself indites the lines "To My Album," lines in a delicate and attenuated feminine hand. They run:

My little Album, thou art fair,  
Thy leaves as yet no impress bear,  
Thou seem'st to say: I fain would go  
And ask those gifts kind hearts bestow.  
I'll not detain thee; thou mayst rove  
Among those friends I dearly love.  
I bid thee go. Then haste and bring  
To me friendship's pure offering.  
Bring me a garland of sweet flowers  
Newly culled from affection's bowers.  
Bring me the fadeless rose of love  
That blooms in paradise above.

Bring me gems, brilliant gems,  
Of far more worth than diadems,  
From virtue's pure perennial spring.  
A soul reviving cordial bring  
From virtuous treasures yet untold.  
Bring me a jewel of priceless gold,  
And when thy every page shall bear  
A name I've cherished long with care,  
Then I will bid thee cease to roam  
And thou shall dwell with me at home.

If we are to take these lines literally Miss Eliza Adaline sent the book about for her friends to sign. It must have been subject, if she so did, to many perils of the road in these old days of pack horse and stage. Such a practice would explain the places far from South Strafford where were entered names in the album, Lowell and Rochester, say.

About half way through the album are entered eight circlets of hair, six of them of markedly light hair such as is commoner than any other color in mid New Hampshire, as in mid Vermont. Most children are towheads hereabouts, even if their hair darkens with the years. There were once nine of these circlets, but that over the name Sidney has been lost. Beginning at upper left, they are "F," five lobes; "M," six lobes; "A," four lobes; "E," three lobes; the lost "Sidney" circlet; "Harvey," three lobes; "Henry," three lobes; "William," five lobes; and "Alma," eleven lobes. From the likeness in texture and color of hair one would judge that all these circlets were from the polls of one family.

In this book there are none of the involved cut-outs of colored paper that embellish Miss Dustin's album. The flourishes to these entries are in the verses quoted and in the penwork. Though both of these books seem to be writ-

ten with the then new steel pens, the writing retains the loops and dots and curlicues of quill work.

The only other item of like sort to these memorabilia books I have run upon is a valentine come by at an auction over in Wentworth. It was in a box of old papers sold for a song. Along with it were records of borrowing and lending in the days before the Civil War, lists of men drafted for the northern army, receipts for taxes, court proceedings in the eighteen-eighties before a justice of the peace, reports on the school districts in the town when all the scholars bore British names, inventories of estates and old letters.

She was a bold miss who sent this valentine of brown hair looped and interwoven with a paper chain colored gold. All is laid on an urn-shaped cut-out of paper, at the four corners of which hearts in yellow tissue paper with their cleft tops facing inward are fastened with little dabs of red sealing wax. Sealing wax holds, too, the wreaths of hair, light brown in color, to the golden chain. In the centre of the wreathed chain is the name of the sender, Melissa J. Colby, modestly prominent through a cloud of dots. Are these dots suggestive of the bees after whom the girl was named?

The name Melissa is in itself fetching, involving as it does associations with both honey and song. She must have been sure of herself, her charms, her powers of captivation, when she wrote this valentine with its legend, and signed it boldly Melissa J. Colby. Did she send it to the man to whom most of the papers in this old boxful of them belonged? Somebody not of her name treasured it and kept it along with records of what was important to him in his maturity. I like to think she is the grandma to whom a Jesse inscribed a book, found with the valentine, in large printed letters in lead pencil in 1909.

The note paper of pale blue ruled in little squares and

the handwriting are of the eighteen-fifties. The paper is three inches high and eight inches long. To the left of gold chain and yellow hearts and brown looped hair we find:

Take this kind friend  
a lock of hair which  
you so oft have  
Seen me whare

To the right of the insignia we find:

And when my face no  
more you see will you  
look on this and think of me  
think of a friend that's  
far from the.

I hope Melissa was more skilled in housekeeping and child rearing than in sense of rhythm and spelling and punctuation and capitalization. The valentine would hardly have been preserved had it not been efficacious. One who failed to respond to it would have been most ungallant to have kept it to show what a lady-killer he was. New Hampshire is no different from Pennsylvania or any other of "The States" in the dominance of woman. In Wentworth, as in West Chester, milady fails seldom to have her will. One must not give old romance away. All I dare say is that I think his name was Lorenzo and that he lived in happy subjection to his Melissa down to the eve of the World War.

The reactions of those to whom I have shown these circlets of bright hair have been various and curious. I can understand the repulsion, though I do not share it, against the hair under glass at the back of miniatures or daguerreotypes mounted as locketts. Shuddering away from such the objectors say: "Ugh! It was cut from a dead body!" I always wonder on such reactions, has it never been the duty

of the objector after the death of a member of his family to go through the mementos treasured by the one now dead? Is there repulsion on such an occasion at the curl cut from the head of the child of seven who died from the fall following the push of a playmate? While one may think it unwise to hoard grief by the preservation of such memorabilia, why is the hair more repelling than the baby shoes that child first wore?

The discovery of these circlets was in its mild way an event to me, a something to be put alongside of the hearing of a wren in our wrenless upland, or the noting, on our return to Sandwich, that the stumpy tailed striped squirrel had survived the winter and was as hard working and as apprehensive of "a rainy day" as ever. The very sight of the circlets was a shock to some to whom we showed them. To Wilbur Moulton extravagance of speech is the spice of life, but there was genuine protest in his physical revulsion at sight of the circlets, and in his cry: "Would you mind putting those things out on the piazza for the time of your stay?" I did not, nor took his words as a hint to be going, but slipped the three albums back into my pocket.

With all his experience of years in collecting antiques, involving the inspection of a thousand attics, he had never come on such an album. "Now that I have seen the things," he declared fearfully, "I'll be falling over them everywhere. I shall save you the first hundred I find."

I confess to a slight repulsion to wreaths made of hair, the kind one finds preserved under glass, but these circlets made out of childish fancy, "the harmless folly of the time," are another matter altogether. The work was, no doubt, taken up on impulse, and carried on for a while with enthusiasm. Nearly all the entries in Miss Wiley's book that are dated are of the spring of 1834. The latest entry dated is August, 1835. The two dated entries of Miss Dustin's

are September 24, 1837, and that of "L. S. Holton," and March, 1838, that of "Friend Martha Holton." We can all of us, no doubt, recall how eagerly we collected tin tags, say, for a season, how energetically we pursued the hobby that summer, and how we put away the boards on which they were mounted when we went back to school in the fall, and had forgotten all about them when we ran on them again years afterwards.

It would be easy to sentimentalize over the circlets. Maybe I have already outraged the sensibilities of those who, like Friend Moulton, cannot bear sight or even mention of such things. I have had what say is necessary to put on record the existence of such trifles. What the origin of the custom that brought these albums into being I do not know, or how wide spread was the practice of making such hair-work. It is enough for me that they reflect a happiness of young life that now is dust. The circlets of hair have place in my memory with lines of Nash and Donne. We are not far from Elizabethan England in the highlands of New Hampshire. Only a fortnight since Phon Smith was talking to me about going maying on Pine Hill a short seventy years ago. After all, that was little more than two centuries later than the day in which Old Herrick did likewise in "loathed Devonshire." There was the difference that Robin and his girls and boys were seeking white-thorn, and Alphonzo and his girls and boys mayflower. I take courage from the concern of the old books with the eternities to quote the old lines that haunt me: "When all your world of beauty's gone;" "Dust hath closed Helen's eye;" "A bracelet of bright hair about the bone."

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## The Chimney Against the Sky

[for FRANK O. SPINNEY]

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MAN hallows a place where he has lived. It does not matter much whether he is counted by his neighbors good or bad. If he has mated and gotten children and worked to support his family the place where they all have labored and played has taken on a kindliness that lasts even when the fields won so slowly from the wilderness are fast reverting to wilderness again. The pathos of man's little time to enjoy the sun, and of his children and the world holding of no value what was all in all to him is not diminished because any particular man that cleared this place or that was not all that he should be. That he is a drunkard does not prevent a man from delighting in Chocorua thrusting its bare cone upward past the red pines and sandy beach and the white-capped waters of the pond. Such a man, like his more godly fellow, remembers the story he heard in Sunday School of the open Bible found on the table in the Willey House, and how teacher used that open Bible as a symbol of lack of faith. If the family had staid in the house all would have been saved, for the landslide that overwhelmed them as they ran out, divided and left the house unscathed. He is moved deeply by the sight of the place he has heard of all his life but has never seen before. He is



even more moved by "the salt dividing sea" when at long last he sees it under the convoy of a summer neighbor.

I know nothing of the men who lived on the benched sides of the twin hills over against Maine. They were many of them gone out of these farms before the Civil War. My map of 1860 lists eight names against the black dots that designate residences, Chadbourne, Leavett, Littlefield, White, Thompson, Johnson, Day and Atherton. They are all "good names," and the last of them particularly appealing to me, since I have Athertons among my ancestors. It is not, though, the goodness or wickedness of these folks that concerns me, but that men lived here, and worked, and faced the winter, and saw their children go out into the world, and grew old with no young hands to help them, and died. That now there are but cellar holes where eight homes were irks me, and that the stony fields they tilled and made yield to them a living are wild land again. Here they turned their cattle out in May, as robins nested where none nest now, and proudly went over the creatures' points. Here on the bare ledges they thrashed their wheat. Here they watched their stands of white corn ripen. Here they ploughed and fenced and treasured their dooryard plants and shrubs, chimney pinks and Turks cap lilies, lilacs and cinnamon roses.

And now there is nothing to show for the work of their hands but two bare chimneys against the sky. If you look closely you can see the slight depressions that were the cellars of the eight houses, but the great chimneys of granite seem to rise from level ground. There are no old orchard trees left to show that here were folks who dried apples against the winter and loved cider, no rose or lilac bushes to testify to that love of flowers that was all the stronger for the difficulty of maintaining them in thrift on these

slopes fronting the northwest. Briars conceal that pile of boulders that supports each chimney. You come on the chimneys one at a time, a half mile apart, each lonely in its isolation. You see neither in deep woods for the houses were set out on the edge of a granite bench on the mountain-side. It was the custom to build in a spot that would ensure a dry cellar, for on a dry cellar depended the preservation of the potatoes and cabbage and pumpkins that varied their winter diet, the basis of which was corn meal and brown flour and salt pork.

The chimney, still perfect despite the heaving power of frost and the wild northwesterners, the chimney with its three fireplaces and hollow shaft above them may once have been set in clay. It is of stone cutting so masterly, though, that it holds the blocks together now that there is no clay between them. Clay was doubtless necessary to hold in the creosote that would fire when high flames soared up the chimney on nights of wild wind. The second chimney on the bench farther east, from which some stones have fallen, must have been the work of the same mason, a master stone cutter if there ever was one.

Has the picture of the three crosses against the sky on Golgotha so dominated the imagination of man that when one has seen one of these shafts, and then the second, he instinctively looks for a third? It is not here, and its absence, and the distance of one chimney from the other adds to the loneliness of the stone work against the sky. One who comes to his summer home in the valley below for Thanksgiving dinner makes pilgrimage when weather permits to the nearer chimney. A sense of desolation and of the futility of man's labor and of his little while alive seizes hold of this visitant such as he never knows elsewhere. Yet he can no more keep away from the site the chimney distinguishes than can a pilgrim from the shrine that has once



THE PROVENCE ROSE



brought him heartsease. Heartsease, do I say? Yes, heartsease of a kind. It is as if he had a tryst to keep.

Once as he looked at the shaft of weathered granite grey against the clouds of leaden black that hid all but the lower slopes of the mountains far to the northward, a wind ripped a rent in the pall. The chimney stood out dark now, against the snow capped shoulders and peak of Washington. It was the threat of winter, the waiting for winter and its snows, as well as the hard work of the hill farm that dispeopled this mountainside, he thought, as he saw the chimney against those slopes that were peopled now, he knew, by the skiers in their legions. It was the snows peopled many places round about with the hundreds brought by the snow trains from Boston. The irony of it, of the then and now, did not, however, lessen the loneliness of that chimney against the white slopes so far away, that chimney that, as he moved away, stood out strangely white itself against the leaden skies. He felt he must buy this land and build again a house about that chimney and let those three hearths know again red coals and folks by the fireside, purring cat and snoring dog. And he knew in his heart he never would, that his troubled feelings were but the qualms of the sentimentalist, that the chimney until it fell, perhaps in a forest fire, would be a shaft to mark a yesterday that will return no more.

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## "Sweet'nin' Marthie"

[for MRS. WILLIAM H. FORRISTALL]

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I HAVEN'T your sixteen cakes of maple sugar tonight," said Lemuel. "I'm sorry, but I had to give four away as peace offerings over in Birch Interval. I promised wood to four ladies there on Wednesday, but I didn't get it over to them until this Friday morning. All four ladies were sitting on the piazza of their cottage when I drove in with it. There was nothing to do but to run up to them before any one of them could say a word and give each one of them a cake of maple sugar and tell them that story of Charles Fellows' you've often heard about, 'Sweet'nin' Marthie.' You never heard him tell it? Well, that's strange and you knowing him more than twenty years. Here it is any way, as I adapted it to the ladies this morning. 'You'd rather be sweetened this way,' I said, 'than the way Zebulon sweetened Marthie.'

"'How was that?' they said, all four together. The situation was saved. I hurried on:

"'Zebulon and Marthie lived more peaceably together in their granite house out back in Lyme for the first thirty years of marriage than for the last thirty. There was warfare, often open warfare, after he was fifty and she was forty-eight. It was about that time in their lives the "sweet-

‘nin’ ” occurred. They were a rugged pair. She had a tongue and he had weaknesses. One of them was drink. She yapped at him when he came home not wholly himself. Once her words hurt his dignity. He rose from his chair with great pompousness and declared: “Marthie, I ought to strike ye, but I will not. I’ll sweeten ye.” He seized her firmly by the shoulder with one huge hand, and the two gallon jug he had just brought home from the store with the other. He lifted the jug to his mouth, pulled out its corncob stopper with his teeth, and, raising it above her head, poured the whole two gallons of molasses over her hair. ‘That’ll sweeten ye, if it doant drown ye,’ he said. It didn’t drown her, I am glad to say, but whether it sweetened her inside as well as out I’m not so sure.”

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## The Hard Speeches of Lois

[for MRS. HENRY D. HOLMES]

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IT was not only in Corinth that the Vermont of yesterday had spirited ladies. The recital of their militancy in "Their Brothers' Keepers" has brought to light a sister of theirs, Lois Carleton Taft of Barre. Though my Webster's dictionary of 1864 lists "Lois" among "Common English Christian Names" I have never met a lady of that name of my generation or read "Lois" on a tombstone in any of the scores of old graveyards I have visited. Webster tells us that the name "Lois" is Greek, and that it means "good" or "desirable." There can be no doubt but that the "Lois" in question deserved both epithets. That in this instance, the name graced one who did not believe in the soft answer that turneth away wrath, some papers that have come down to her great granddaughter instance rather pointedly. What had caused the friction between the little lady and Mr. Timothy Bigelow the records do not state, but as she recommends he read the passage in the Bible about Naboth's Vineyard perhaps there was a quarrel over land at the bottom of the trouble. The records do state, though, in Mistress Taft's own handwriting, what charges were brought against her. Thus the statement runs:



These are the accusations which Mr. Clark brought against me in the spring of 1817.

First, for telling Salisbury Bigelow to tell his father that I wanted he should read the 21st chapter of the 1st book of Kings.

For refusing to let Mr. Bigelow grind on the grindstone.

For not lending Mr. Bigelow the hatchel.

For not visiting more at Mr. Bigelow's.

For not asking Mr. Bigelow how his folks did when he came here.

For calling Mr. Bigelow Ahab and his wife Jezebel.

For letting Lois and Rhoda go down to his house Fast Day on a visit.

For not being willing that people should come here visiting.

For not attending meetings more.

For going out of conference when he got up to speak.

Barre, Vermont

LOIS TAFT

Lest there be those in these days who have no Bible handy I shall quote I Kings, 21:25: "But there was none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up." Perhaps I had better add, now that flax is a rare crop, that a hatchel is a board with long teeth of iron used to cleanse the tow from the flax that is to be made into linen. Fast Day is a day in spring set aside for prayer and abstinence.

It is, I suppose, the Mr. Clark aforesaid who writes the report of Sister Lois' refusal to conform to his wishes in respect of Mr. Timothy Bigelow. She apparently would not say she was sorry for her attitude towards him. The last name of the signer of the following report is, however, undecipherable, though I suspect the scrawl following the "Francis" is "Clark." This is the report:

Whereas our sister, Lois Taft, has gone aside from her covenant vows in her unchristianlike conduct toward Mr. Timothy Bigelow in sending him the 21st chapter of 1st Kings and in her hard speeches treatment towards him and has given the enemy occasion to speak reproachfully of the religion of Jesus and I have endeavored to labor with her according to the spirit of the Gospel the first and second

steps have been taken and no satisfaction obtained I therefore feel it my duty to tell it to the church and request them to look into the matter and endeavor to labor with her in christian meekness to bring her back to the path of her duty.

August 6, 1817. Barre, Vermont.

Whatever the upshot of the matter we may be sure Mistress Lois held her ground. Her great granddaughter, Mrs. Henry D. Holmes, of Montpelier, writes me that

her independent attitude seems to have been passed on in some degree to her children, for I have another set of papers regarding complaints against the son of Lois, Daniel Taft, for absenting himself from communion, for withholding his support from the gospel ministry, etc., records bearing dates from Feb. 10, 1848, to May 10, 1848, when Brother Taft said, "he would not under present circumstances" change his ways, and he was excluded from the fellowship of the church.

It would seem that Lois must have had a serene old age, and one well provided for. Mrs. Holmes writes me that her great grandmother's husband, Caleb, retired when he was sixty years old, giving his son Dudley

a life lease of the property on condition that he care for him and his wife as long as they lived and supply them annually with eight bushels of wheat, four bushels of corn, one bushel of rye, one hundred weight of good pork, one hundred weight of good beef, twenty pounds hog's lard, one hundred weight of sugar, four gallons of molasses, fifteen pounds tallow, three barrels cider, apples, garden sauce and potatoes "as many as I need," soap for washing, three bushels salt, etc., yearly the use of two good cows and six sheep, and thirty-five dollars in money, *if needed*. If Caleb should die, the wife would have \$17.50 annually *if needed*. Of course the underlining is mine, for in these days it would seem that almost anyone could manage to spend, if not actually need, \$17.50 yearly, but I suppose with everything provided from the farm itself there was very little use for money.

With such caninness and independence in the family it is no wonder the race of Lois and Caleb has persisted, and is of consequence in our day and generation.

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## The Swallow-Tailed Brothers

[for FREDERICK H. SAFFORD]

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THEY did as near alike as they could in everything, those brothers came to manhood along back in the days Victoria was crowned. Folks hadn't forgot their old folks' folks came from England, for all two centuries had passed since those first comers began clearing along the Massachusetts shore, and for all those two wars the old country forced on the young. Money was still pounds, shillings and pence in most parts, hay was English hay, and half the books were English printed, books of behaviour for lovers, books of behaviour for children, *The Whole Duty of Man*, and the Bible. You found *Pilgrim's Progress* in every house, and *Paradise Lost* in many. Right here in this house they read Joanna Baillie and Tennyson along with those Longfellows and Whittiers you just bought. You probably noticed how full those bookcases were with English books.

"Yes, sir, those brothers did everything together. They went courting together and married sisters. They were wise enough not to try to live together in their father's big house after he died, the elder took that as part of his share of the estate, but they were in business together in half a dozen ventures, they went to the same church, they voted the same

ticket, they farmed together, and they dressed alike. It was their dressing made them known to fame. They were tall, well set up men, straight and muscular. Their clothes became them. And those clothes were always full dress, beaver hats and swallowtail coats, Sabbath and weekday, behind the counter and in church, fishing on the lake or haying. The folks of the village were so used to them they hardly noticed their attire, but to strangers the sight of the two of them so dressed, one just a step ahead of the other, cradling wheat, was a nine days' wonder."

We were talking at the auction in the house their father built in 1812, and in which they were born. It was the noticing of the two beaver hats that brought out the story. I did not stay all day so I did not see what became of them. It was the son of the elder of the two men of dignity that was selling out at seventy-five. His wife dead and he childless, he was eager to be off to Florida to escape the rigors of the oncoming winter, which was forecast in the moan of the wind even on this day of mid August heat. There was no suggestion in the pleasant old man selling out of the dandy his father had been, or in his younger first cousin, the son of the younger brother, who was helping at the sale. They were just folks like the rest of us.

All sorts of furnishings in the house, though, spoke of culture and consequence in aforetime. The George Herbert of the household was Pickering printed, London, 1850, the sets of jamb hooks of two of the fireplaces vied with each other in delicacy of shape and perfection of workmanship. The canopied beds were marvels of grace and circumstance, and the old glass the best the early nineteenth century could produce. There were flower prints in a drawing book labelled Paris and old diaries that proved the brothers' family connections were people of world wide experience. So I have found it in homes hereabouts in scores of instances. How-

ever withdrawn into themselves the present members of the family they have relatives or ancestors of distinction. America has not yet gone back on the old adage of its people, three generations from shirtsleeves to shirtsleeves, or on that other adage that Simple Simon's grandsire was a grandee.

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## The Cakes Came Back

[for KATHERINE SLEEPER WALDEN]

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THEY were alike as two halves of an apple, those two sisters. They were busy and bustling, affable, and of an assurance so unoffending that their friends were hardly even amused by it. Had not their father been the great mill owner and member of the governor's council? They never forgot that, or that all that pertained to them had a large importance, almost a sanctitude. They were fifty, and maidens, and middle Victorians, when most of their fellow members of "The Ladies Aid" of the Congregational Church were sprucing out of late Victorianism into a modernity that was alarming to the pair. They had a light hand at beating up eggs, and at making the filling of White Mountain Cake. So they always labelled the two sizeable cakes they made for the annual fair of their sorority, writing every letter of the seventeen a capital so that both little slips of paper looked like patterns for the samplers they had made as girls.

No one would have thought of challenging their right to preside over the cake table. They were themselves skilful salesladies, but knowing more of the ways of gentlemen than they were given credit for, they had always a pretty girl at their table. It was a matter of pride with them to

sell out all their cakes, that is, all but the two White Mountain Cakes they brought in. They did not wish to sell them because it was impossible, in their estimation, for buyers at a ladies aid sale to really appreciate such cakes. They carried the cakes in proudly, for all to see, stripping away the napkin that covered the tissue paper that covered the finely powdered sugar that was sifted over the tops of the cakes. When they thought nobody was looking they slipped the cakes in under the counter that was "the cake table." There was a shelf there where the precious cakes could be concealed. It was a catastrophe when some cruel fellow member insisted on the cakes being displayed for sale, and sold.

It came, in the end, to be considered wholly unorthodox for the White Mountain Cakes to be forced out. Year after year the dear ladies were allowed to pretend the cakes were left over and so allowably taken home by their donors, or to pretend to believe that nobody knew they sequestered them, and took them back after the fashion of Indian giving, or to pretend they bought the cakes themselves. Every year the ritual or rigamarole was gone through with. The two sisters must have known everybody in the ladies aid knew about the sequestration. What people did not know for certain, and what was much debated, was whether, in the elaborate statement of sales in the handwriting of their mother's generation they affected, they put down payments for the two cakes they presented and then took home again. The evidence is contradictory. The sisters always reported impressively on the sales, giving the total number of cakes sold and the total for them, but not the itemized report of every cake sold. Some say they saw, when they had a chance to scan the list, two entries of "cake two dollars." There were no other entries of cake at so high figures, for sponge cake or chocolate cake, and no entries at all for White

Mountain Cake. It was the sisters' prerogative to make the State's chief "culinary distinction" as they called it. Others maintain there were no entries identifiable with the two cakes. You interpret it as you will, as a curious manifestation of closeness on the part of the sisters, or as a manifestation of the attitude that the common herd could not appreciate such dainties as their tapering fingers brought into being.





night. The stars have looked down upon all that man has done, upon all his living, upon all his loneliness, upon all the puttering affairs he holds great.

The stars are insistently before man all his seven ages. They are of moment to him in childhood and youth and maturity, in middle age and the clear-sighted fifties, in his years of declining strength and in old age. No man wide awake in this world and aware of its beauty and significance, but has been given pause by the stars, brought to attention by them, daunted by what they portend. In the superstitious years man blessed them for his impulses toward good and blamed them for his lapsings into evil.

I was seven when we moved to the Italianate house with the cupola, but it was even before that father began to talk to me of the stars. I can see him across all the years pointing them out in the dusk of late summer at Church Lane, gesticulating toward Orion and the Great Bear with the croquet mallet that he was loath to relinquish using. In later years at Tulpehocken Street he would sometimes take me up to the cupola, and point out Andromeda and Pisces and Cassiopeia, but he was fonder of that point of vantage in the thunderstorms of midsummer. The son of an inventor of electrical apparatus he had a faith in lightning rods that did not descend to the next generation.

Those visits to the cupola to observe the stars must have been in November, I found out more than fifty years later, and from Orra A. Locke's *Geography of the Heavens and Class-book of Astronomy*. Orra wrote her name in the book on February 26, 1870. It was not long after that she ceased to be Orra A. Locke and became Orra L. Fellows. I knew her as a next door neighbor from 1916 for a decade, always in that time a little old lady with white hair, proud in her last years to have lived out a half century's span of married life, and to have known on their golden wedding day how

greatly she and her husband were appreciated by a wide circle of friends. After that "Orra A. Locke," in a handwriting much less fussed up appears: "Amen." Was that written in there by that wag, her Charles, to indicate that Miss Locke was no more? Or did some brash child of a boarder, years later, driven to the bookcase where the book reposed by a rainy day, half resent the befurbelowed letters she could not imitate, indite that "Amen" in petulance at so primly perfect a chirography?

It was in an old atlas of the heavens that came from mother's side of the family that I hunted up the constellations I had pointed out to me or that I had heard talked over before me. Perhaps it was the very "celestial atlas" by Elijah H. Burritt, who did, too, the letterpress of Orra's book. This geography of the heavens has been "greatly enlarged, revised and illustrated" by H. Mattison, A.M., in this new edition of 1866, done ten years later than the first edition.

It is curious how Novembry the whole book is. Chapter I is "Constellations on the Meridian in November," and, as I turn over in desultory fashion the three hundred and forty-three pages of the book, the word "November" jumps out at me from page after page. That first chapter begins: "If we look directly overhead at 10 o'clock, on the 10th of November, we shall see the constellation celebrated in fable by the name of Andromeda." Here again are the familiars of father's talk of a half century ago, Andromeda, Pisces and Cassiopeia.

It is Part I of *The Geography of the Heavens* that has been thumbed over, the part that has to do with "The Constellations." Part II anent "The Solar System" is almost inviolate. Nor does the book open to any place in Part II. In her interest in Part I Orra is very fairly representative of the average run of humanity. It cannot be that man has

been more concerned with the stars than with the sun. It is, perhaps, that man has always taken the sun for granted, the all effacing sun that makes the world one blaze of light, or that, withheld from the world, brings gloom, and absence of growth, and the threat of death to all living things. It is, perhaps, too, that man has been busy all the daylight hours, but that, with the first star of evening, comes the promise of rest from labor, and of ease, and of time for observation and for wonder at all there is to see and admire. It is but a moment seemingly, after he notes that first star, that its fellows fill the heavens in their myriads. It is as if a veil were drawn aside, so suddenly are the stars come, or as if the sharp points of the stars had just pierced some film in the heavens and were now in full fanfare from horizon to zenith. It is only, of course, with the dropping of the sun that the stars already there in their hosts, are revealed in a trice.

It is November brings out the stars in the most incredible numbers and in the most intense brilliancy. As the leaves thin, more and more stars find room to look in upon us from just above the horizon. As the nights lengthen and the days shorten the stars are earlier in the skies, and still visible in their westward march when we get up in the morning and begin to go about the chores of the day. As the cold sharpens, greater and greater hosts of stars stand out in the interstellar spaces, until the skies are thick with them from all the horizon round up to the zenith.

They are up to strange antics in November, some of these austere dwellers in the firmament. November is the season of shooting stars, and of all the privileges they bestow. One known to all country boys and girls allows a like indulgence to that occasioned by the discovery of the red ear in corn-husking. A trifle and a wonder are one in import, the red ear on the threshing floor and the red

meteor falling across the skies. It is with the graver side of meteors, though, that Orra's book is involved. I note "November" on page 18, on page 24, on page 155, on page 156, on page 157, on page 158, on page 160, and on page 161. It is in these latter pages, on the note of falling stars, that Part I ends. What augury did Orra find in the meteors recorded at Constantinople in 472, in Florida in 1799, in Montreal in 1819, and throughout the United States in 1833? Is it by chance the book opens most willingly to the engraving of this meteoric display of November 13, 1833?

There are more humans with a fear of the dark than with a fear of the night. Little children run wild in the twilight, but are quiet on the fall of night. Little children are unafraid of night when there is a moon in the sky or the sky is star-studded. Starlight, though, has its menace. There is something strangely inimical in the stars. Their very distance and impassivity affright the sensitive. Francis Thompson is not the only one of us who feared "The abashless inquisition of each star."

We are familiars in our countryside between the Ossipees and the Sandwich Range of many manifestations in the sky: auroras that cover all quarters of the firmament; triple rainbows; thunderheads that tower to the heights of heaven; dawns of angry red and wan white that blend to paint the world old rose at daybreak. We are not to be surprised then by falling stars. A sombre day will die out to an eve more sombre toward November's end. Clouds will bank all heaven save where the afterglow of an obscured sun bursts through with wild light for a breathless interval. As night falls the wind will set in with an intermittent but mercilessly recurrent surge from under the polar star. That wind will drive away but slowly the low clouds, and bring other clouds to take their place. There will be a feel of snow on the air. You will notice a shooting star or two as

you close up for the night the hen houses and the long barn. You will sit up late with the fires that the house may hold through the night the warmth they have dispensed. The wind will wake you past midnight, or the feeling you carry into sleep that you should be piling fresh wood into open fireplaces and kitchen stove. You will look out to the mountain wall to the north. You will see hosts of travelling clouds abroad, bound one and all dead south under that hammering wind. Suddenly meteors in their scores will be unloosed over Sandwich Dome, scores and scores and scores of them. There will be so many you will wonder will the red streams of their fountainlike falling never cease streaking that high northwest. When this picture is graven on your memory, as it will be from just one beholding, you will have come to a full realization of November in our northland. Then you will have known fire far off in the abysm of the skies and icy cold on your own threshold, autumn's end in North Sandwich.

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## Our Scenery as an Early Victorian Saw It

[for GRAMMY HUNTER]

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THE Englishman Bartlett and the American staffs of Nathan Currier and of Currier and Ives were not the only artists of early Victorian times who delighted in "American Scenery." *A New Drawing Book of American Scenery* by Benjamin H. Coe, "Teacher of Drawing," was published in 1847 by Kellogg and Comstock at Hartford in Connecticut. The names of B. B. Mussey and Co., 29 Cornhill, in Boston, and of John W. Moore, 138 Chestnut St., in Philadelphia, precede the names of the Hartford firm on the title page. It is the neighborhood of Norwich, thirty-eight miles southeast of Hartford, however, that is his favored locality. He delights in depicting scenes on the Yantic and Shetucket, streams that unite at Norwich. The frontispiece to my copy is lost, so I can generalize only from the thirty-three prints that remain of the original thirty-four. Of these thirty-three, thirteen are of Connecticut, a pottery at Norwich being depicted; and a fishery at Guilford, with nets and lobster pots; but houses and landscape interest him more than industries. He includes a hat factory in Maine, however.

Twelve of his sketches bear no titles. Of these a log cattle shed or sheepfold is the most interesting. It shows a log

enclosure with great poles across it and hay piled on the poles, hay that doubtless served the double purpose of fodder for the creatures that were housed there and of thatch to keep them snug against rain and snow. Another, of a combined granary and hog pen, has a martin box by it on a high pole and the birds in the air about their home. Two of the sketches of buildings show accommodations for pigeons, a phase of country life rapidly disappearing in these days of specialized farming. In the picture of the gambrel roofed house "On the Shetucket" there are two boxes with two compartments each attached to one gable, and in such a little stable as one finds on village places of an acre or two there are holes for pigeons into the top of the steeply pitched gable.

The number of steeply pitched roofs and the number of gambrel roofs he sketches are rather surprising. Durham and Guilford and West Granby in Connecticut are neighborhoods with which I have long been familiar, but in none of them do I recall either a very steeply pitched roof or a gambrel roof as typical. Roofs steeper than the ordinary angled roofs of forty-five degrees I have long been sensitive to, regarding them in Pennsylvania as survivals of German architectural effects. The gambrel roofs are, I suppose, indicative of Hollandish influence working east from the Hudson Valley. You find Spurrs and Weavers and Knickerbackers in Western Massachusetts and Western Connecticut, and where you find people of Netherlandish stock you may expect to find characteristics of their architecture and ways of farming.

It may be because of Coe's penchant for the picturesque, associated a century ago with the shackly and dilapidated, that he chooses as his subjects so many houses that have seen better days. He has a love for little houses, too, but most of the old houses outside of the tidewater towns, and



many of them in those towns, were surprisingly small. The so-called manorial homes on the Schuylkill outside of Philadelphia are many of them of no more than six rooms. Even if one realizes that the servants had quarters outside one wonders how the long families of long ago were housed in such homes.

Coe takes us, in one sketch, to the Hudson in New York State, and in two sketches to Portland in Maine. He takes us west of Springfield in Massachusetts to Granville, and east to Bradford. Bradford, across the river from Haverhill, is as near as he comes to New Hampshire. But if he put no New Hampshire scenes in his book his book sold in New Hampshire. My copy comes from Dover, from a Quaker family that could find nothing unauthentic in his sketches. He preserves for us a well with two heavy buckets balancing each other over a pulley, and a pump with iron handle and square trough. Half hogsheads for pump water and whole hogsheads for rain water are delineated in detail, and buck saws and baskets, hens and hogs, and folks in bonnets and broadbrims. There is, curiously, no horse or cow in any of his pictures. There are dogs, but nary a cat; rowboats and railroad trains. There is one covered wooden bridge, and one bowling alley. He is fond of trees, descanting at length in his introduction as to how they should be drawn. Romantic though his renditions are, he is on the whole safe and sane in his advice to beginners in drawing. That he was an influence throughout all New England I have no doubt. His drawings are certainly the only begetters of an amateur art I have seen many specimens of in middle New Hampshire.

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## A Sad State of Affairs

[for FRANK W. TEUPE]

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THEY were talking of a little town in Vermont very proud of its fair. Though it was a tiny place with its houses crowded close together in a narrow valley by the environing hills, it called its fair "The World's Fair." The world did crowd in on it that fair day, and there was scarcely one among the outlanders in attendance who was not well towards the condition prevalent the world over on fair days. There were those disapproved of this fair, fearing for the effect on the morals of the neighborhood of its too happy attendants. There were others who were afraid the lumber yard for the town's wood working factory would be set fire to, or one or the other of the covered wooden bridges across its tumbling river.

"It's kind of ironic, though," said a former resident, "that crowd on fair day. The rest of the year there is plenty of room for all its own folks and the few come in to trade there from the farms on the high hills round about. I kept store there once and I was starved out in a year. It's a dwindling country and few summer people to help out from June to November.

"You just would not believe, if you did not know the place, how crowded it is on fair day. The hills crowd about

it. Its houses crowd together. Its fair day people are packed there as close as sardines in a tin." The narrator was interrupted by a quiet man standing at the counter. "Too bad," he observed simply, "those poor drunks must be so jammed there cheek by jowl they haven't room to stagger."

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## In Our Beginnings

[for DANA H. FERRIN]

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THAT recording instinct so deep seated in man is responsible for the little book in manuscript. It is but a whiffet of a thing of ten leaves and a cover of paper as heavy as felt. The leaves are exactly four inches high and a trifle more than three inches and a quarter wide. It is in this small compass diary, account book, recipe book, and writing book, though the flourishes of quill work are justified as a notation of "Finished Planting." It was written in Newmarket, that old town on Great Bay back of Portsmouth, and on a water front farm or one that had access to the marshes for the cutting of salt hay, the end of the making of which is duly recorded. It spans the years 1781-1798. It would seem its entries have been copied in from other records as it begins: "This is 1785 New Stile," but goes back to 1784 on the third page and to 1781 on page fourteen. Slight as the booklet is, I am going to print the whole of it to show just what was most important in the life of a farmer, or as he would have called himself, a husbandman, of the early years of our republic. The book worked itself up from tidewater in that migration of folks from a cabined life in an old settled community to the freedom of the frontier that was so characteristic of the movements of our

population until a generation ago. The American wants elbow room, a chance for initiative and the freedom to do things in his own way.

It is significant that public events find no place in this book. It would seem that Andrew Burleigh, on whose life it throws sidelights, must have been the first chronicler of the events here recorded. Entries on slips of paper, such as one finds in old Bibles, were probably recopied here. That his death is put down shows that other hands had a share in its making. Under date of 1790, April 21, we read "departed this life Andrew Burleig(h) aged 67 years 8 months and 3 days A Sermon by Mr. Miltemore (Whittemore?) the text in Corinth 15 Chap at the 52 verse." How well we know that text, we who are old, and have heard it at funeral after funeral:

"In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."

One gathers the book is largely Andrew Burleigh's creation from an entry and certain accounts. We find, for instance, on page 18 this entry: "1786 Janua 7 day: Jacob Bennit came to live with his Uncle, Andrew Burleigh, His age ten year and 1 month &      days. His weight 73 lb." Jacob, no doubt, was to be weighed from time to time thereafter to determine whether he was properly fed by Mr. Burleigh. That is all there is on page 18. On page 19, under date of 1786, are these items of indebtedness, crossed out with lines drawn catercornered from upper left to lower right and from upper right to lower left:

Sarah Dyar to A burleigh	L		S		d
Nov 23 to 1 pint of molases	o		5		o
Nove 25 to half pint of rum	o	=	6	=	o
Nove 27 to 1 jill of rum	o	=	3	=	o
Nove 27 to 1 jill of molases	o	=	1	=	3

1787 jan 9 to one peck of corn	1	=	0	=	0
Janu 18 to two quarts of meal	0	=	5	=	0
feb 9 to one peck of meal	1	=	0	=	0
feb 21 to one pint of molases	0	=	5	=	0
feb 21 2 ounces of tea	0	=	10	=	0
this put in another book					

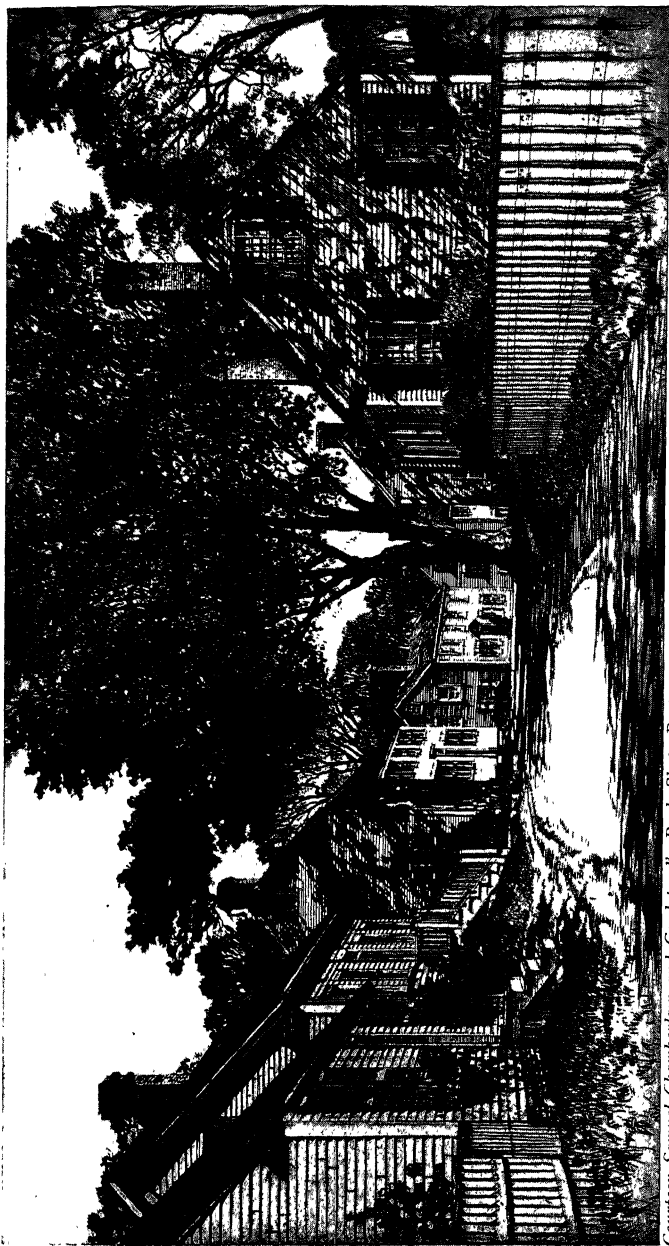
On page 20 we find:

1786 October 27  
then settled with  
Sary Dyar and  
there is due to  
Sary Diar from  
Andrew Burley estate  
2 = 7 = 0 old tennor  
  
Novem 11 due to Sary dyar  
for 1 Week & 4 days  
work 3 = 7 = 0 old tennor  
L 5 = 14 = 0 old tennor

The faithful Webster informs us: "Old Tenor, New Tenor and Middle Tenor, different descriptions of paper money, issued at different periods, by the American colonial governments in the last century." The last century to 1864 was, of course, the eighteenth century.

Page 1 of the twenty pages of the book reads:

This is 1785 New Stile  
For this year is very  
Remarkable the Summer  
fruitful great quantity of  
English hay and large Crops  
of Corn plenty of Sider  
October 20 A very great rain  
it began on thursday 8 oclock at Night  
Rained untill Saturday 8 or 9  
Oclock like a Shower  
Which caused A very great  
freshet and did much  
Dammage



*Courtesy Samuel Chamberlain and Goodspeed's Book Shop, Boston*

A BEND IN THE ROAD AT NEWCASTLE, NEW HAMPSHIRE

*by Samuel Chamberlain*





Pages 2 and 3 are taken up with entries running across both pages. At the top of page 3 is the legend "Newmarkett." The "Finished Planting" five times repeated shrinks from the boldness and largeness of the first entry to the meekness and littleness of the fifth:

Finished Planting May 29 1784 New Stile  
 Finished Planting May 31 1785  
 Finished Planting May 18 1786  
finit 1787 May 19  
 Finished Planting May 21 1788  
 Finished Planting May 17 1791  
 Finished Planting June 3 1798

There are but three entries on pages 4 and 5:

Finished Mowing English hay Aug 14 1784  
 Finished Mowing Salt Hay Aug 13 1784  
 Finished Mowing English hay July 21 1786

These entries of planting and mowing reveal either seasons early and late or that the husbandmen got to the job more quickly one year than another. They also reveal the truth of our Sandwich adage that "in old times they planted on the full moon of May." English hay is still a term sometimes used for herd's grass or timothy in our town.

On page 6, above the recording of Andrew Burleigh's death are two entries anent corn: "1786 Sep 21 finished geathering Corn" and "1788 Octo 8 geathering corn." Again we note the wide margin for the performance of the one task from one season to another. Page 7 reads:

1788 March 24 Durham  
 Departed this life  
 Abigail bennick the wife  
 of Abraham bennick on  
 Sunday evening aged 84 y 2 m 12 day  
 1788 Departed this life  
 Abigail thomas Wife of

Cap Joseph thomas on  
 on Sunday noon—both was  
 buried in one day Mar 27  
 a sermon preached to each  
 funeral by Mr Coe  
 and by Mr hooper

Page 8 is:

1785 A Very Remarkable year  
 the Winter long but not  
 very cold the Spring  
 backward the Snow  
 was deep & a hard Crust  
 So as to bear Oxen  
 April 18 So as to be sled  
 ing all day the Snow was  
 to be seen by the sides  
 of the hils and by the  
 fences the 10 day of May

There is a carry over "Wee" at the end of page 8, followed by a "We" more economical of letters on the top of page 9. This page begins "May 29 We finished planting 1785," differing from the May 31, as the last day of planting in 1785, recorded on page 3. Page 9 continues

June 4 day the apple  
 trees bloomed full  
 the 4 of June Very wet  
 and Cold for the season  
 this summer was  
 A large quantity of Hay  
 great Crops of Corn  
 and plenty of sider  
 from so late a season  
 there was so great a plenty

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See All things are  
 Posiabile with God

That is the only religious tag in the book. It is not added afterwards, but it is an integral part of the writing on the page, being in the hand of the rest of the entry. One expects a wonder recorded in a diary and Andrew Burleigh's book is no exception. It comes on page 10:

1780 May 19 A Very Strange  
and Remarkable Dark day fryday  
Began about 9 or 10 of the  
Clock & by Noon or one oclock  
people lighted Candles to  
eat their dinners——  
it was a Strange Vapour like  
like a smokey brace Cloud  
tosing to and frow from point to point  
and as still as could be  
the first part of the night  
exceding dark also——  
A great deal of hard  
thunder after the dark day  
in the Summer

That "brace," I take it is a miscopying of "black."

Page 13 is brief:

1783 July 28 old Stile  
1783 August 9 day at Night  
There was a very hard black  
frost which did much  
Dammage

Page 12 is concerned with 1786. It runs:

1786 N this year the  
Snow went away in february  
the Spring warm wet and forward the  
Summer Very Dry but  
little Corn apples and  
pertatoes  
hay Something plenty

the Season some dry until  
 December then but little  
 rain until there was many  
     Snows

Page 13 records a long drought:

1787 this feb 20  
 this day Plenty of rain  
 and this is the first rain  
 of any (amount) We had Since last jun  
 of to be so much as to  
     Wet the earth any great

---

1788 the first Snow  
 Decem first day  
     1 inch deep

Pages 14 and 15 are taken up with items concerned with the haying, the weather and money:

1781 September 15 finished giting in our salt hay  
 1792 a Sharp dearth begun early in the Spring  
 1793 much the same  
 1794 the winter moderate  
 a little Snow dry Spring  
     and Summer Grain Short  
     flax and hay very short

I doubt "dearth" means famine here, or even "scarcity." I suspect "dearth" to be a miscopying of "drouth," a form of drought heard now and then in New Hampshire.

On the lower half of page 15 we learn that an Andrew Burleigh borrowed money now and then. It would seem there must have been two men of that name, father and son perhaps. The handwriting of the man whose indebtedness to Stephen Clark and Dud Smart is written down is very like that of the man who made the earliest entries in the book. The explanation may be that items concerning both

men were recopied from records left by them. If there is a scribe at work on older documents he must be a very early one for the handwriting is surely late eighteenth century or of the first years of the nineteenth century. Here is the account:

1791 May 2 Stephen Clark  
to Andr Burleigh  
5 dollars cash  
Dud Smart to And burley  
May 21 1 dollar cash

On page 16 we have "A Remedy For Sore eyes":

take the blooms of elder  
boyl them in Skim milk  
turn the milk with Alum  
Wash your eyes with they  
Whey

Below this remedy is another, "A Certain remedy for A freeze":

take rosted tirnips and the leaves of hemlock  
jam the hemlock then mix the tirnip and  
hemlock together make a plasture of it put on  
New twice a day bathe in salt and water  
the froze

At the top of page 17 is

finished moing English hay  
Aug 21 1788  
this year plenty of hay  
Sider Scarce indian corn scarce  
flax and rie plenty

I have already quoted pages 18, 19 and 20.

The farmhouse from whose attic this little book came stands high above the Pemigewasset between Bristol and

New Hampton in surroundings very different from those of the Newmarket in which the happenings it chronicles occurred. Only the mowing of salt hay, however, is alien to the routine of our inland hill farms. The world it is concerned with is a little world, but, patently, a prosperous one. Slight as the record is, it speaks contentment, a life in which "sider" and godliness are at one, and man has leisure to consider the changes of the seasons and the wonders they unfold.

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## The Flaming Mountains

[for MRS. HENRY QUIMBY]

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THERE is no consensus of opinion as to what sort of weather the northern lights portend. One New Hampshire man who knows his Alaska, too, hates them, regarding them as the forerunners of storm and cold. Another man much in New Hampshire but an explorer and mountain climber in the Canadian Northwest, has always been cheered by the auroras, holding them as heralds of clear and quiet weather. So it is, too, with the stay-at-homes among us. One man looks for a warm spell after the heavens over the Sandwiches are full of multi-colored streamers, another looks for wind and arctic cold. There is contradictory testimony as we discuss the matter in the corner store. That discussion is apt to end on an effect of the most memorable aurora ever seen from our nook of the woods, and that full fifty years ago.

One of us will describe an aurora which filled the heavens all around the horizon and all the way up to the zenith with alternate divisions of white light and green like the markings on a half melon. Another will recall an aurora in which all our northern range of mountains was reversed, turned upside down, above its actual self in the northern skies.

Then an oldster will observe: "Yes, but neither of those spectacles was as terrifying as that one that drove Pendexter Mason to recant. He was a mighty religious man but that aurora cost him his faith in God. That night it was red like a great fire all the way round back of the mountains. Pendexter, over north, thought the world was coming to an end. A Free-will Baptist of the old sort, he held not at all with the Adventists, but those mountains with the red flames shooting up behind them and throwing red waves of fire up to more than their own height again, shook his faith. He thought the fires there in the north were going to pour out like a great flood of lava and burn up the world.

"He had had a feud of years' standing with Webster the storekeeper. That was the greatest wickedness of his he could recall, a sin he treasured, cherished, gloated over. Scared, he thought he ought to make it up with the storekeeper and be ready to meet his Lord. So he went down to Skinner's Corners and made it up. When the world didn't end, and next morning came, and things were as usual, he was so jumping mad he had humbled himself before the storekeeper, he said he'd lost his faith in everything. By the sign of those flaming mountains, he had thought God had betokened his anger with the world. Things were come to a pretty pass when God did not carry out his purpose of destroying his handiwork. It must be that those furnace-like flares from Israel to Coroway were hell fires let loose by Satan. What else could have happened but that Satan had triumphed over God when he, Pendexter Mason, was again on speaking terms with Caverno Webster?"



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## It's Red, White and Blue

[for CLYDE BROWN]

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THERE can be little doubt that the place of origin of the snuff-box of horn is "somewhere in America." It is red and white and blue, or white and blue and red, white horn base with scribed decorations filled in with blue and red coloring matter. Save for the six-petalled tulip, conventionalized, so common as a symbol painted on barns in Pennsylvania Dutchland, the decorations can hardly be referred to any recognized designs. Two of these, one on either side of the six-petalled fertility symbol, might be called branching plants with bud and leaf.

Above the six-petalled fertility symbol, which is scribed on the hinged lid of the box, is what might be called a crown arched between two leaves or two rabbits' ears, as you may choose to call them. Back of the conventionalized tulip of six petals, with its pointed leaves between the petals, is another symbol of six parts, with diamond shaped cross-hatching. The contraption, in shape like a sneak-box boat truncated at both ends, is three and a quarter inches long, two inches wide across its middle, and three-quarters of an inch high.

That shape makes one wonder has the box travelled all the way to New Hampshire from the Jersey coast, where,

say at Barnegat or Tuckerton, is the native locality of the sneak-box. That very white horn or bone makes one wonder, too, as does the scrimshaw-like carving, whether the box was not fashioned at sea, from a narwhal's horn perhaps. The plates used to cap the truncated ends then, you imagine, may be of the great sea turtle's carapace, rather than the cow's horn you at first thought them to be. Whatever the material of the box it has been split from some sort of horn and fastened together with brass brads, not unlike those found in old houses in New England when shoe-making was a winter's trade in many farm houses.

With this box, in the Meredith attic from which it came, is a slightly larger snuff-box of the same shape, but from its yellowish color, apparently of bone rather than of horn. There is a sunburst in the centre of the six-petalled tulip on the lid of this box, with a six-pointed emblem like that back of the tulip on the smaller one. Rays break out from between the two sorts of six-pointed emblems, twelve sets of rays of three rays each. A wreath outside of the double emblem encircles it. There are diamond-shaped crosshatchings to right and left of the lid, and the two-leafed or two-eared motive above the lid. Brass hinges, still in good working order, allow the box to shut tightly.

There is no doubt the two are the work of one man, but whether of local origin, and of deer's horn and bone, as some believe, or whether products of the ox or the narwhal, I leave it to antiquaries more learned than myself to determine.

It is impossible to trace the house from which these snuff-boxes ultimately came. The man from whose estate they were bought was himself the administrator of many estates and he sometimes took the money was due him for settlements in curios of one kind and another. All you can be sure of is that the snuff-boxes are authentic bits of Americana,

but whether of local origin, or deep sea origin, or Alaskan Indian origin, or Algonquin Indian origin, only the specialist can decide. It is enough for me that they are of good artisanry, odd, curious, primitive, unlike anything I ever ran on before. They have been long cherished by people now no more. Though new to me they are familiar. The moment my eyes fell on them they bridged my day with times long gone. Did some old ancestor of mine, a Humphrey Ather-ton, or that seaman, Captain Makins, carry them in his pockets in the long, long ago?

# Music Hath Charms

[for HARRY F. DAMON]

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OVER in Tamworth the Damons treasure a homely sheaf of verse with woodcuts entitled *The Ploughboy: A Poem, Part First*. It is by the Rev. William Cook, author of *Olive Grove*, etc., and it was printed in Salem, Salem, Massachusetts, I take it, in 1854. Though it acclaims the farm and the simplicities of rural life, there is no smack of the soil in it. That which most nearly approaches a thing freshly observed, written with the eye on the object, is the coming up of the bucket out of the well:

Down the deep well the bucket goes,  
Tumbling, rattling, splashing,  
Then cool and pure it overflows  
For good morning washing.

The narrative presents two brothers, a sister and a grandam. It chronicles grandam knitting socks, Ellen going to the grist mill, the drunken father of the Lotsills and his neglect and abuse of his children, and above all "The Ploughboy" playing his flute. On her way home with her bag of flour Ellen was serenaded by her lover.

Then richest flutenotes floating clear  
From a neighboring grove,  
Were wafted tuneful to her ear,  
And so she slowly drove.

She really "rode" rather than "drove," for she was pony-back.

The desert parts he vocal made  
But not with noisy strife;  
Not long alone, men sought his aid  
Sought him, who gave them life.

Brother Cook does not get along with his story very quickly. "The Ploughboy" and Ellen are not wed when we take leave of them on page 28. That, doubtless, was to be accomplished in Part Second. He tells us that "If the reception of the first be good, the second part will follow in a few months." I do not even know if there ever was a second part. It could have been awaited with joy only by the collectors of bad verse, and they were few in 1854. The most resolute of these collectors I knew was Dr. Horace Howard Furness, whom I have heard read Thomas Holley Chivers with passionate joy, tears in his voice and eyes. My father, too, could put extraordinary expression into his reading of the verses of a rhymster in the family. Her sublime achievement was in verses on her thirty-eighth birthday:

Thirty-eight! Thirty-eight!  
How the years do circulate!  
Thirty-eight! Thirty-eight!  
How birthdays accumulate!

Destined to rank with this is:

Lo now, where the good farmer hoes,  
The father with the lad,  
Those thrifty, mealy shenangoes  
Will make the country glad.

He loves many good things, "the village Church, the still Lord's day," "twilight's lovely glow," "dewy brightness," "new milk foaming in ample pans," "New England's hills," "the lone cool shady lane," "the pasture gate," "rich thriving farms," "the silver tones" of bells, "columbines gathered among rocks," "Shakespeare's tongue," "that moss-brown well," "home at holy twilight," and "Peace, plenty and good rosy health." This is as near to poetry as he can come, in phrases that to him have beauty and lyric lift. He believes that "Poetry breathes everywhere," that it is "for what I live." There is, of course, no line of poetry in all the one hundred and twenty-two lines of his effusion. There are incredible lines in plenty, such as "That he soiled her new dress," "So romantic readers beware," "Amidst more pompous devotion," "Youth on the surgy flood," "The cow for rum was sold," "The Bible angels all have wings," "Doctrines preached right or wrong," "Pray lyturgic, or not formal," and "What remains is not worth your choice." We can certainly agree with the words with which he takes leave of us:

Though my own be these words of song,  
Cottage life to portray,  
It surely is not vain, or wrong  
To write so humble lay.

The decorations on cover and back and title page are in perfect harmony with the crudity of the verses, of the printing and of the binding. If ever there was a homemade affair, it is *The Ploughboy*. On the cover an eagle in black, in full flight, holds in his mouth three leaves on which are printed severally "The Friend of," "Agriculture," and "Abundance." Though the back is rubbed I think I make out on it a basket, a plough and a sheaf of wheat. On the title page is a scythe, hoe, rake and spade gathered into a unity of effect by a short section of a wreath. There is a woodcut

of "The Ploughboy," a woodcut of Ellen, and five woodcuts illustrative of the action of the story. The woodcuts are after drawings much in the fashion of those the children of yesterday executed on their slates of horn or marble. In "The cottage by the Moor" we see a house, salt box style, with the back roof sloping down to the height of one story. It is a two story house, too pretentious, I should say, for the home of a cotter. A church spire lifts to upper right, and two cows lie in repose, or is it at cud, on the grass plot before the front door. Other woodcuts, equally crude, show "Grandam knitting socks" in a slat-back chair, with a sewing table and high chest before her. "Then drove she from the mill" shows a bonneted girl with a bag of ground grain on the beast before her about to essay the steep incline up from the grist mill. "The children found him tame" shows a boy and a girl at a horse's head, the boy patting him, the girl feeding him. In "The Ploughboy charmed his maid" the swain is playing the side flute not only to the delight of his beloved, but also to that of the cow, which is drinking in the notes head in air. This illustration, he tells us in the preface, is "to let rural habits be seen in their simplicity."

He believes that "The power which the Ploughboy's flute has over the cow is often observed." I have seen a Brown Surrey cow with crumpled horn step up the road at a lively gait to a lady's humming of the Toreador song from *Carmen* and a goad behind her, but my considerable experience with the creatures does not include their reactions to the flute. Pastoral poetry could perhaps supply us with parallels. There were, doubtless, oldsters about who could have told Brother Cook about "oaten stops" or such neatherds as the Sicilian poets sang. I have had good talk with octogenarians in knee boots about Theocritus, Bion and Moschus. Though the Rev. William proves himself a Latinist I doubt if he knew Greek. He harks back to Burns

with his "cotter," and his appreciation of the virtues of "peasantry."

*The Ploughboy*, though, is in no tradition. It is the individual effort of a man totally unskilled in writing, and with no aptitude for rhymes, a man who never stumbles on a felicity. It does not inherit from hymns, it has no place in folk lore. It is a valiant effort on the part of a man to do what he has no training for, or no natural skill. It ranks with the hen coop made by a tyro who is not even a hatchet or saw man, one who is miles short of being a carpenter. It is honest, though, and sane. Its maker had a childlike pride in it. I have no doubt he was wreathed in smiles of satisfaction as he peddled it from door to door.

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## No Cocks of the Woods

[for RALPH PEASLEE]

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FOR the first time in my summering of a quarter of a century in New Hampshire I saw no pileated woodpecker in the summer of 1937. Twice I thought I heard one and once two others of the family saw one flying over, but I never set eyes on a cock of the woods from the sixteenth of June, on which we arrived, until the twenty-eighth of September on which we left for our home in Pennsylvania. Nor did I see the goshawk this summer, or an eagle. Big birds of all sorts were scarce, the great blue herons that used to be a feature of the sunset skies coming over only four or five times all summer. One of their crossings presented a little spectacle I had never seen before. In the henyard on my way back to the barn after gathering the eggs I heard alarm cries from the vigilant cocks. Looking up I saw two herons headed south, flying almost side by side, and each with a sizeable fish held crossways in its mouth. Once only before had I seen a great blue heron carrying a fish, and that several years ago.

For the first time in years robins nested on the place, in the first crotch of a Bartlett pear tree in the Dorking yard. They brought off their brood of three successfully and we had young robins about, on and off, all summer. The blue-

birds nested in the bird house, and except for that moulting period during which they repair, I suspect, to the blueberry ledges on Whiteface, they were with us all the time. So were the sparrows, song sparrows and chipping sparrows, field sparrows and vesper sparrows, white-throats and gold finches. The Savannah sparrows were missing this summer. The song sparrows and white-throats were in song until we left.

The indigo visited us now and then, the last time on September 17th, when I heard and saw his flight song over the garden. He launched himself up the second time from a low tree in a patch growing up by a stone pile and went as high and continued in song for as long as I have ever known him. The family noted him at it again towards sundown. I had noted him in the morning as I was burning brush on the cleared potato patch.

The barn swallows went on September 1st. I saw three on the wires two days later, birds from farther north I take it. As late as September 10th, when I was watching a little blue pigeon hawk come down to us from the north, I saw two barn swallows swoop after him, coming down to him from high in the air. They, too, must have been birds from farther north, part of a late brood such as that which did not leave us one year until September 20th.

It was as nearly crowless a summer as I have ever known. Herbert Perkins told us they did not bother the corn at all, after planting, and not more than three times during the summer did I note them down on the ground in our place. Once in a long while two or three or four passed over, but it was not until the middle of September I saw a bunch together. Then I counted sixteen in those circling and cawing evolutions that Charles Fellows called holding a convocation, or protracted meeting.

While the family were in Dearborn's store in the Centre

on September 20th they saw a yellow-rumped warbler come to the screen door, cling there and pick off a fly. Paul Townsend said it had come there unafraid when a cat was just within the screen door. Paul also reported that his cat had caught two humming birds this summer. I saw one, by the bye, as late as September 20th, after a cold spell and frost of mornings for several days. They were about still in the balmy fall weather that followed on the passing of the cold spell.

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## Back to Scandinavia

[for MARY CARPENTER KELLEY]

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ONE wonders if the little box in the semblance of a book is by Ichabod Colby. We are told in the *Carroll County History* that he was an ingenious man, who made a "rattle box" for his grandson, the Rev. Alonzo Stillings, more than a hundred years ago. The book whittled out of white pine has a sliding top that fits in so snugly you have to look sharply to see where it meets the borders it slides between. It is cut out of a single piece of white pine, first growth or pumpkin pine. It is just short of seven inches long, just a mite more than three inches wide, and just two inches high. It was probably used as a treasure box of some sort, for paper money, or old letters, or the like. It has no signs of wear and tear on its interior, though its exterior is browned through handling and the years. There are five raised lines across its back, after the fashion of the lines of gold across the backs of books of the eighteen-thirties.

It is covered top and bottom by the familiar wave motive carving, the "waves" being without curves and meeting at angles slightly sharper than right angles. One line of such carving of waves a half inch high runs round the top of the box on one end and on both sides. Two lines of very low waves run down the center of this sliding top. They are

bordered each side by two lines of higher waves, making six lines of waves lengthways on the sliding top. There are two lines of waves crossways the sliding top at its inner end, and three lines across its outer end. There are in all, then, eight lines of waves the long way of the top, and six lines the short way.

On the bottom of the box the lines of the waves longway the box are seven, and those shortway six. Is it only by chance they total at thirteen? The decoration is of a sort coming down from the most primitive times. You find it in Swedish chests reaching back to Viking times. You find it in early English decoration. It may be it is of so natural a sort that it would occur anywhere in the world, but one cannot help wondering was it not handed down here in New England from Mayflower days? The little box was found just over the Maine border in that countryside of large houses and old time prosperity between Newfield and Parsonsfield, not many miles from Ossipee Corners where Ichabod Colby settled early in the last century. I do not, of course, claim it as of his whittling, but I like to think it may be his. The man from whom it was bought said it had been in his family all his life. It is a primitive, no doubt of that, and of so simple a design it might appeal alike to a Mohammedan rugmaker of Samarkand and to a Shaker of Canterbury. Like other primitives it takes us round the world and back again to the York County attic where it was found.

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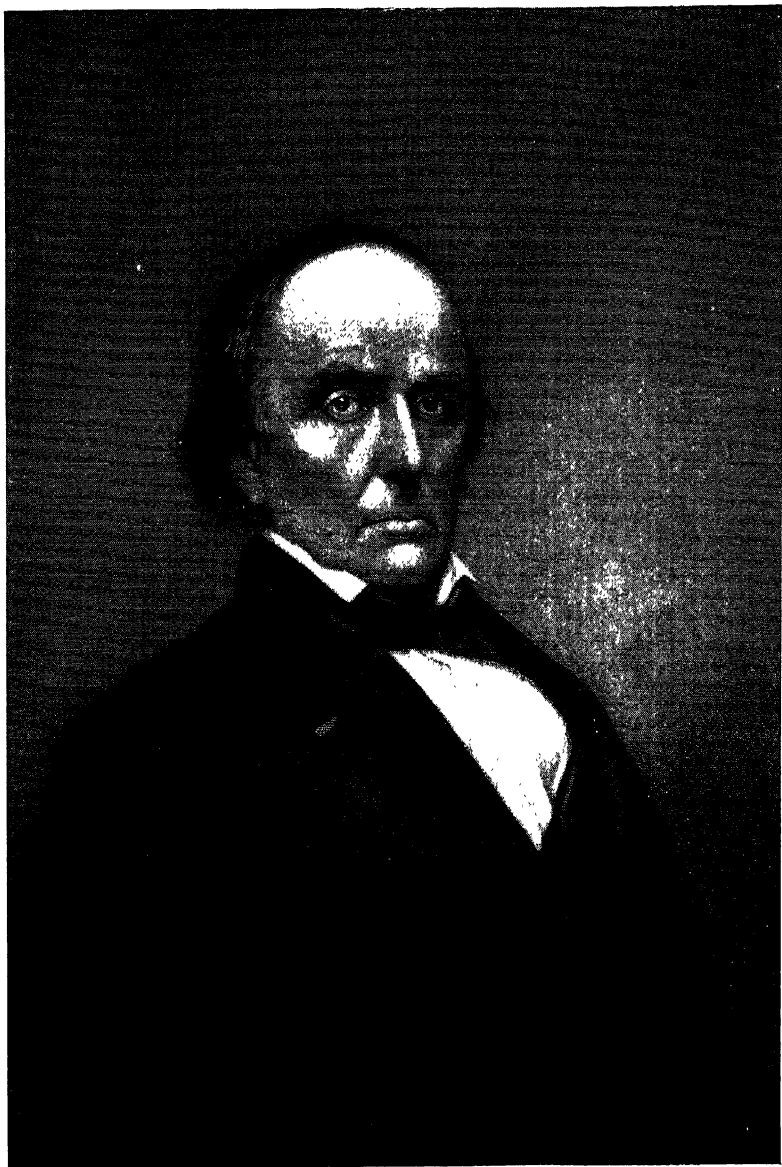
## Yankee

[for EDWARD WINSLOW WARREN]

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THE Yankee is much missaid. It has been fabled of him that he would work harder to get out of work than any other man the world over. It has been fabled of him that he would take a quarter hour in catching his horse in the pasture and in harnessing him to drive to the store when he might have walked there and back in ten minutes. It is true of one Yankee, John Scriggins, who preceded me on my farm in Sandwich, that he spent hours rigging up a little circular saw to cut pumpkins for his cows when he could as easily have cut them with a spade.

It is said, and truly, that the Yankee loves gadgets above everything else. One friend of mine, Saco born and Bowdoin schooled, and a first citizen of Biddeford, has two hundred and odd switches in the wiring of his house. Another friend from Rhode Island delights more in the possession of an automatic heating system in his house than he does in the comfort that it brings him. He is happy in the thought of the human ingenuity that makes it work for him while he sleeps. He loves all the paraphernalia of his flat-topped desk, so wide and long, cards and paper of all sorts, clips and rubber bands, pens and filing arrangements, paste pots and shears. He thinks beauty would be out of place



DANIEL WEBSTER





in his workshop, the den of a research scholar. What he is openly proud of is the piazza he built strong and workmanly with light lumber.

That there are Yankees, though, who are devotees of beauty, is proven beyond dispute by Emerson and Hawthorne, Thoreau and Frost. Hundreds of nameless artisans, too, are of the brotherhood. The glass blower who fashioned the little gold digger's bottle in Lyndboro, made in the early eighteen fifties in imitation of the leather bags in which the Forty-niners shipped their gold, felt the artist's joy in creating this bubble of glass of widely flaring top and juglike shape. The ironworker who wrought the much befussed sadiron with delicately turned handle of maple was so devoted to the detail of beauty that he perfected the four spirals out of sight in the closed box of the iron as carefully as if they were in view.

This box of wrought iron riveted and dovetailed together is of plate an eighth of an inch in thickness. The box is triangular with the characteristic convex sides of the sadiron. It is all but five inches and a half long, three and a half inches wide at the broad end and two inches high. The smaller iron that slips into it is four and a half inches long, two and three-quarters inches wide, and not quite an inch thick. This inner iron was doubtless heated in the coals of the open fireplace, and inserted by means of tongs into the triangular box. If one had three such irons one could have one's contrivance in working hotness continuously save for the shortest of intervals between the cooling of one inserted iron and the insertion of another hot one. A sliding door comes down at the broader end of the wrought iron box. This is of sixteenth of an inch stuff. It pulls up by a wrought iron handle with a brass knob on its bent over end. A spring, still with plenty of life in it after its century of existence, holds up the door. The wrought

handle curves in and out at either end with an almost u shaped bend. It is fastened to the lid of the box by a thumb screw through the pierced rounds at either end. The proportions of this elaborate iron are admirable, and its workmanship all that could be asked. He who made it was both artisan and artist.

It has been given to me to watch at their work only three New Hampshire blacksmiths, but any one of these three could have made such an iron. Two are now with God, and the third moved out of town. Men of their kind are scarce today. Whether we can produce their like again is a question that is troubling those of us interested in the higher artisanry. Two of these men were all but artists, and the third had a passion for trapping furbearing animals and for curing their pelts that was close to the artist's sacred fire. Would any one of the three I knew have taken the trouble with those spirals the maker of my sadiron put in the interior of the outer iron? Those spirals were utilitarian, to keep the inserted iron from making too hot the ironing surface that did the smoothing work. It is my belief each one of the trio would gladly have taken the trouble.

It is an ingenious contraption, this iron within an iron. What most stirs me to speculation about it is not the concern with beauty manifest in it, but those concealed spirals. Is it a Yankee characteristic to hide one's light under a bushel? Barnum did not, or Daniel Webster. Is either, though, so characteristic of the stock as Calvin Coolidge, who was reticence itself about his accomplishments? What of James G. Blaine, or Whittier, or Cotton Mather? What of the Adamses, or Lowells, or Cabots? What of Eli Whitney, or William Lloyd Garrison, or Tom Reed? Is there any typical Yankee? Is Uncle Sam really the symbolic figure of the New Englander? Uncle Sam is the country storekeeper of yesterday raised to the nth power. Was the country store-

keeper, though, more typical of the Yankee than the backwoodsman in his log cabin, the farmer in his clapboarded plank house, the country lawyer in his big house of brick with sunburst over the front door, or the sea captain with observatory and telescope in his becupolaed mansion of eighteen forty? All of us in America are, of course, Yankees to our cousins in Europe, all of us north of Mason and Dixon's line Yankees to the Southerners, only Maine men and New Hampshire men, Vermonters and Massachusetts men, Rhode Island men and Nutmeggers Yankees to the rest of the Northern States.

Descendants of New Englanders in New York and Pennsylvania, Ohio and Indiana, Illinois and Michigan, Wisconsin and Iowa, and on to the Pacific, do not hark back in type and ways to the New Englanders. Such men are proud of New England ancestry, but they would not claim to be, in the most exclusive sense, Yankees. I know New Englanders who say Yankees are long-nosed and muffin-mouthed men of East Anglian origin, lean and lanky fellows good at a trade, close mouthed, and fonder of anything else than farm work. I know other New Englanders who say a New Englander ceases to be a Yankee when he leaves the farm. I can cite you merry and rotund Yankees of purely English origin who are loquacious as any Irishman, good at a story, apt mimics, antic old boys, far from adepts with tools, with none of that inventive ability that so many hold is characteristic of the true Yankee.

Nor can you say that the Yankee is to be identified with the Puritan. This one is, that one is not. There are Puritans in as great plenty among the Scotch-Irish in Pennsylvania as among men of purely English antecedents in New Hampshire. Nor can you say a nasal drawl or the gift of the slick answer is indicative of the Yankee. There is no one type of Yankee any more than there is one type of Pennsyl-

vania Dutchman, or Virginian, or Appalachian mountaineer, or cowboy, or Californian. How could there be with so great mixture of bloods in the England from which the New Englanders of the old stock spring? Lapp-like man of western Europe, Iberian, Celt, Teuton, Norman went to the making of the Englishman. Physically, intellectually, temperamentally, morally, there are as many types of New Englanders as of Old Englanders. Only local color and dialect differentiate the Yankee from his fellow Americans outside of New England. Only local color and dialect differentiate one group of New Englanders from another. Even the adding or the dropping of an "r" at the end of words is no infallible sign. Such may be the habit in Newport or Boston, but such is not the habit in inland New Hampshire.

Nor are all New Englanders given to plain living and high thinking. Go back a hundred years to the life on the manorial estates along the Connecticut River from the sea to Canada. There were high living and plain thinking. Go back to the life in trading ports along the ocean front from Connecticut to Maine. There things were in the saddle and rode mankind. All that distinguishes the Yankee is found elsewhere: the desire to set to rights a world gone wrong; cleverness in trade; efficiency in mechanical things; laconic speech; proverbial philosophy always in seasonable use. There are Yankees in all but local color and dialect everywhere in the world. Yankeeeness, blessedly, is an essentially human quality.

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## Heart-Warmers for Winter

[for MRS. JOHN S. QUIMBY]

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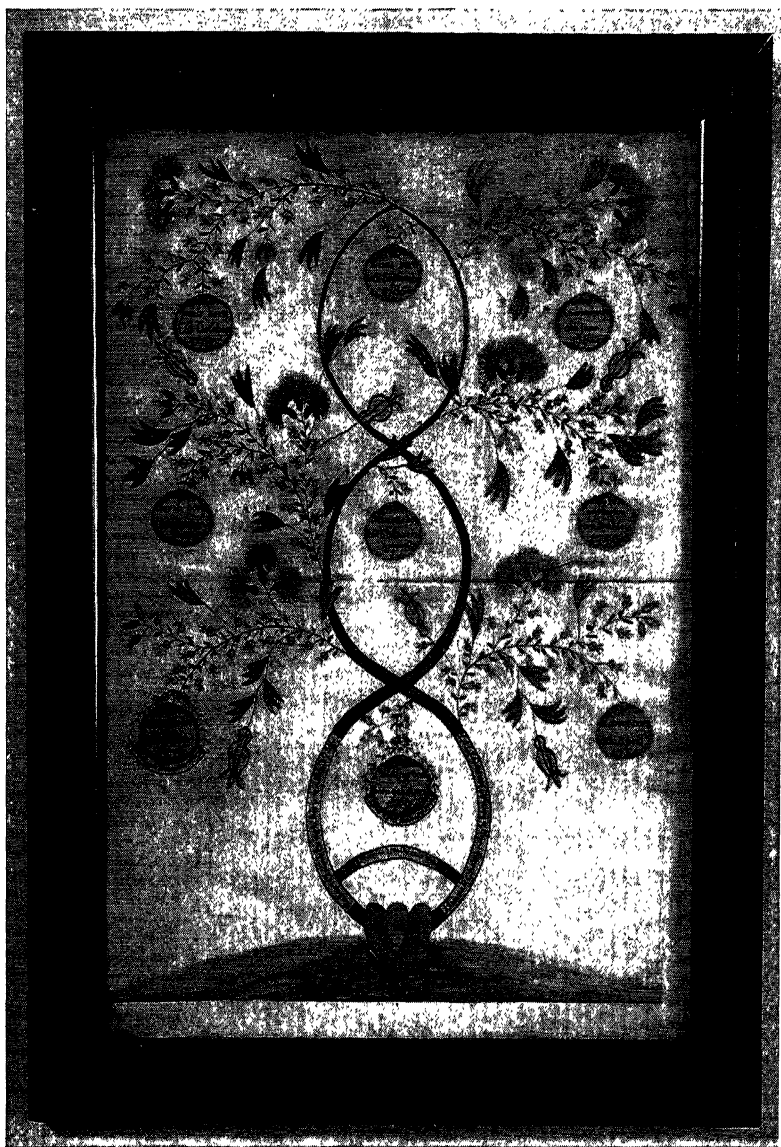
THEY are wrong who hold that sobriety of color is a characteristic of New Englanders. We of inland New Hampshire are as fond of red and yellow as any Pennsylvania Dutchman. We painted our first clapboarded houses red, and when we began to paint our floors, scarcely more than a generation ago, we were addicted to a warm yellow for the floor paint. We prefer white for the exterior of our houses nowadays, but we have still our share of houses painted red or yellow. Red is surely our color for winter. We loved it for wrist warmers and mittens when there were wrist warmers and mittens, and we continue to use red rags on our fishing lines dropped through the ice into pond or lake. Fire engines of a color other than red would not be fire engines after our heart. Automobile trucks of red warn us, by their brilliancy of hue, of their coming as they round all too briskly the sharp curves of our country roads, roads made for the leisurely progress on horseback of neighbor to neighbor in backwoods days.

We wonder, sometimes, at the taste of our forefathers. Its average is far above that of our day, but it lapses strangely now and then, especially in the second quarter of the nineteenth century. How could those years countenance

such combinations of color, for instance, as we have in most hooked rugs, in tinsel pictures, or in pincushions of bead work. There are hooked rugs of beauty. I am looking at three such as I write, but they represent the searching of a quarter of a century. I have seen tinsel pictures, too, that are not bad, but a cushion on which disports a bird in silver against a background of Turkey red is the least offensive bead-work of that sort I know. There is bead-work, of course, of great beauty. I have seen a purse in old rose and soft green that glowed like a jewel, but the pincushions are of an outreness all their own.

If you have seen fall in the northland of New Hampshire darkening into winter you will begin, perhaps, to understand the insistence there of bright colors in indoor decoration. The necessity of that which will warm the heart when all the world without is grey or white becomes instant to you in such circumstances. Spend a November in Sandwich, say my neighbors, and you will realize habits and attitudes of mind and ways of furnishing that would be difficult for you without that experience. The gay colors of Swedish painted furniture are accounted for by similar conditions. Intensity in color in interior decoration is an inevitable result of life lived largely indoors.

It is my guess that the pronounced reds and yellows of "scenery" mirrors are so explainable. Two we have in Sandwich and that have been long in that countryside, are good of their kind, and consonant with the old house on whose walls they hang, even if they are not, by a rigorous judgment, objects of art. The one in a gilded frame, with cornice-like overhang of ball decoration at the top and with beaded decoration at the sides, is twenty inches by ten inches in the outside measurements of its frame. The "scenery" is seven inches by eight and a half. The mirror below the "scenery" is eleven inches by eight and a half. This mirror



THE CHEESEBROUGH FAMILY RECORD





was one of the many treasures in the well-appointed house of the Wingates in Tuftonboro, where there were hundreds on hundreds of beautifully bound books of old authors, woven coverlets that brought cries of wonderment when they were put up, and Hepplewhite furniture of exquisite proportions.

There is more than a touch of Romanticism in the steeply pointed roof of the house by the deep stream in the picture. A blue mountain rounds up in the background. The foreground is yellow and green and half the house roof is a vivid red. One wonders was this an imported "scenery," or native rococo work of the Byronic period of American life.

One is surer of the bowl of fruit of the other picture, of apple in red and yellow, and grapes in blue, and green leafage. The bowl in black and white is right Staffordshire, but the spatter effects about the panel presenting the fruit, and the groupings into diamond shapes of nine gold daubs, are of our America of the eighteen-forties. The oblong panel on which is painted the bowl of fruit is grey above and greenish yellow below, colors that tone in with the china bowl and at the same time afford sufficient contrast with the fruit to bring apple and grapes out distinctly. The frame enclosing this "scenery" and mirror is twenty inches by eleven inches, with veneered sides in dull red an inch and a half wide that slope down to the glass. The "scenery" is six and a half inches by eight inches, and the mirror ten inches by eight. A half inch strip of red veneer separates "scenery" and mirror. "Scenery" mirrors generally have heavy Empire frames. It is a delight to come on one with a frame of such restraint and simplicity as this.

Either mirror would warm the heart on a winter's day. The red and yellow of the "scenery" of the one, and its gilded frame, have an appealing brightness. The red frame,

and red cheeked apple and red spatter of the other, are very part of the "gay and beautiful" that wins such a response from the primitive in man. Both "sceneries" and their frames are as warming to the heart as the kitchen stove full of burning beechwood to flesh and blood.

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## A Rhyme of Little Beacham

[for LITTLEFIELD BEACHAM]

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LITTLEFIELD BEACHAM was a man of quips and saws, rhymes and ready answers. He lived way back on Young Mountain on a good farm carved out of the wilderness. He was kept in complete subjection at home, so he loved to gad about and talk loud and long whenever he could escape from home. He was a huge hulk of a man, and his name, of course, led inevitably to his nickname of "Little" Beacham. The contrast of the size of him and his abject submission to his wife led to less chaffing, however, than you would expect. His answers, ribald and annihilating, protected him. The gossip was that the more he was restrained at home by his godly and "nice spoken" wife the more loose was his speech abroad. It is difficult to quote from him, but one rhyme, less forthright in expression than most, must be given, lest one sort of New Hampshire folk lore be lost forever. When Little Beacham met a young stranger and found that he was unmarried he was in the habit of thus addressing him:

I wish you a long life and a happy one;  
A little wife and a pretty one;  
Above your chin and under your nose,  
And up to your lips and down she goes.

The prevalence of such rhymes and their declamation by church deacons should go far to remove from Puritan New England that old slander that it did not rejoice in wit and the joy of life.

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## Her Pearl of Great Price

[for SYLVIA CLARK]

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IN nearly every home of any pretension at all there is some object treasured beyond all its other possessions. At Wingates' it was the bedspread in red and blue for the great four-poster. At Twombleys' it was the silver creamer of as delicate lines as ever a Revere could fashion. At Cottons' it was a great chest, upright and heavy doored, in red and gold, that a sailor son had brought back from Spain. At Furbers' it was a tall case clock, one of the three known to have been made by the local clock maker of a century and a quarter ago. At Withingtons' it was the set of Lowestoft, made in England with a "W" in gold on each piece. At Merrills' it was the two armchairs and four side chairs of Chippendale. At Chamberlains' it was the pair of lily pad sugar bowls made at South Stoddard by some glassblower who had carried there the Wistarburg technique.

On some places it was things outdoors that the folks prized most and the neighbors talked about. The chief possession of the Robertses under Tumble Down Dick was those two fields of redtop, lying low in the bottom of the valley, and surrounded with old pine running up the mountains north and east and south. At the Irvings' it was a famous apple tree, a Porter, from which, in old times,

Parson Piper had always had a bushel in early fall. At Goldthwaites' it was a peach tree, come from a stone thrown out of the back door, and braving the northwest winds of winter on its exposed bank. At Ellises' it was that strain of white corn, sweet though early, that had made their home on the high hills above Snowville famous for a century. At Eatons' it was the Brown Surrey cattle preserved in purity from the first settling of the intervals around the Presidential Range. At Wentworths' it was the view of the Sandwiches from Israel to Chocorua, on smoky days far off to the north, on clear days so close in their purple bloom you felt them no more than a few fields away. At Wiggines' it was the martins about their porticoed bird box, and at Tuftons' the beaver dam and tooth felled trees. At McDaniels' it was the bear dogs, black and tan, deep voiced and gentle. At Tewkesburys' it was the Devons deep red and wide horned. At Horns' it was the beehives and at Weeds' the trout pond. And so on and so on at all the hundred homes I know in New Hampshire.

At Emersons' it was a fan, an exotic, dominantly in gold and black, but with red and green, too, in proper proportion, and with touches of pink and blue. The fan was Italian in feeling, and with scenes from the days of wigs and wasp waists, laced coats and knee breeches, grace and ceremony. It is of paper and of *papier-mâché* lacquered, a brilliant trifle, peacock gay. One wonders how it ever reached the white farmhouse in deepest Puritania, with its wide outlook over lake and mountain, and its century and a half of well being. All her life from six to sixty the woman of the house had known it, but she could not find out whence it came. Her mother was gone before she was curious enough to ask about it, and all the other older members of her family could tell her was that it had been a treasure in the house for as long as they could remember. It was as

alien to this northland as the Sextette from Lucia, or "Caro Nome."

Esther Emerson was not at her home on the day of the auction. She could not face the dispersal of all she had for all her life held dear. In her old age she and her son, her only child, had received so good an offer for the place they could not refuse it, or rather so good an offer that she could not object to the selling of it when she saw how his heart was set upon the sale. They were going for the late summer and fall into a camp, but Florida was in his mind for the winter, Florida with its reds and yellows as warm as Italy's. He was tired of the white winters she so loved. Back along her people here had been keen hunters and trappers. She was well provided with muffs of mink and neckpieces of otter. She had a beaver cloak and several robes of bearskin. She did not have to bide at home, said Frank Bryer at the auction, with all those furs to keep her warm in sleigh and automobile.

Did the fan come, she often questioned, from some sea captain, like Moses Brown, settling in the neighborhood long ago, and leaving it to his people as an heirloom? It certainly lent a sense of lordly life to her appearance on occasions of ceremony. It livened the south room on overcast eves of November, when Winnepesaukee glittered palely to the westward under the level rays of the setting sun. It caught and reflected firelight after night fell, and the wind rose, and all the heavens were black with low clouds dashing scud against the windows. Time was she had a pair of peacocks snugly and roomily housed, but she had had no luck raising young ones, and then first one and then the other old bird dropped off. The fan was without a rival when the debacle of the sale of the place overwhelmed her.

She had just a month from the time the first payment

on the place was made to the time she must vacate it. In that time she had to turn her boarders out, find another place to house herself and her son, auction off all the household stuff it would not pay to put into storage, adjust herself who had always been landed proprietor to the position of tenant, above all else to reconcile herself to the now open relief of her son that he was rid of the farm and the boarders.

Hardest of all for her to acknowledge to herself was that he had not the eyes to see that he was dealing his mother a mortal wound in dispossessing her of the place on which she had been born and lived for all her years. It was that way, of course, with his father, now long dead, but she had hoped that her son, brought up under her sole influence, would take after his mother and be sensitive to the wishes of her who had brought him up a worker and a gentleman. She had had a large satisfaction in the fact that her boarders had come back to her year after year and in times when automobiles and roadside camps had put out of business most of the boarding houses in the byways. She had been proud, and with justification, of the table she set, and of her clean rooms, the fresh cut flowers that were on the tables in sitting room and dining room and that greeted in their rooms the boarders on their arrival.

She had been stunned at first by the sale of her place. Then she had been in such a slough of despair as she had never known. Then she was put to it to know what little necessities and luxuries she could take with her into exile. Her mother's rocking chair, that had been in this, the oldest house in town, from its mideighteenth century beginnings—that five slatter she would take for sentiment's sake. And the fan, of uncertain origin, but romance laden for her, the delight of her eyes and innermost being from childhood—that she would take for her own sake. Never



had she known such beauty concentrated in so small compass.

Then, suddenly, in a fit of near madness, she was seized with an obsession to destroy everything that had been associated with her happiest moments in this house high in the sun. She would root out the pink spiraea, she would break the priceless fan to pieces, she would choke to death her heartless son, strong man that he was, while he slept. Had she not given him life, and now that he had proved unworthy of it, had she not the right to snuff out what she had created. She came back to herself sobbing wildly, as she broke two of the left-hand sticks of the fan with the first unconscious wrench she gave it.

After that she could not bear the sight of the fan. It could be mended, of course, it had been most skilfully mended years ago by a thin brass plate on a stick broken at the right end. The fan would always remind her of that moment when she had had murder in her heart, and so unnatural murder at that. She threw the broken fan in with what was to be sold. So it was put up at auction. It was knocked down to me after some spirited bidding with an antique dealer. It fell into the hands of folks who appreciate it. It is gay and beautiful and provocative. One is never over questioning how it came to the lake country. One cannot look at it without wondering what its earlier history may be. One doubts if ever before it could have brought such happiness as it did to Esther Emerson those fifty years and more it was the light of her eyes. And then to have it come to be the symbol of all she had lost, her home, her hopes, her pride, her trust in her son, her belief in herself!

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## Old Folks on Ossipee Hill

[for ETHELINDA and LOWELL INNES]

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OSSIPEE HILL is not only the highest point in the town of Waterborough, but in all York County. This Maine hill is not to be identified with the New Hampshire Mountains known as the Ossipees, miles to the northwest. It adds to the confusion when people promote Ossipee Hill, as many do, to mountainship, and call it Ossipee Mountain. Though the roads that run round Ossipee Hill to north and to south on its lower slopes, two to the north and one to the south, are pretty well deserted of folks, and two of them all but impassable, the big hill still plays a part in the lives of men. Sailors at sea, sixteen, or twenty, or thirty miles distant from the tower on its top, set their course by it. It is the point, too, that folks round about look up to and comment upon as Conway folks look up to and comment on Washington, or Gilford folks the Saddleback Mountains, or folks on our own home hill Black Snout or Chocorua.

The last inhabitants of the higher slopes of Ossipee Hill were old men, as the last inhabitants of the northern slopes of the Ossipee Mountains above South Tamworth were old women. Two brothers, with very little money between them, lived in a story and a half house the worse for wear.



A BIT OF MAINE COAST  
*by Winslow Homer*



Another old man, living alone nearby, reported that one of the brothers was sick and not receiving proper care. The neighbor informing was deputed by the justice of the peace to whom he carried his tale, to bring the ailing brother from the attic to the first floor where the room off the kitchen was warm from the open fireplace. He enlisted the help of the well brother and they got the sick man down. In telling how cold it was in the attic the neighbor said: "It was as cold as a January orchard facing north, and with the bars in its fence down."

The well brother had rather resented his neighbor's interference with his affairs. He thought his sick brother would have overed his sickness anyway. "Wasn't he born in that attic, and hadn't he slept there all his life, save when he went to California in '49 and lost all his savings? That man Carroll who spied on us, and told the judge, was the meanest man on the whole hill. Did you hear what he did Old Home Day over at the Chadbourn Meetinghouse? He ate of what there was to eat, cake and blueberry pie and all. Wasn't he surprised when they passed the plate around for contributions, expecting a silver offering. 'Why,' he said, 'By Gorry! I didn't know there'd be a charge. I jus' ate to be accommodatin'.'

"Did he give up any money? Yes, he had to, to save his face. He dropped a penny in the plate, an old penny with an eagle on it. When they were countin' up the money he sneaked round to the deacons and begged his penny back, holding it was his pocket piece, and if he hadn't it any more he wouldn't have any luck.

"And did you never hear about Carroll's one and only proposal of marriage? He, too, fell sick, and I reported it. He might have died, living there alone. He was mending a mite when the doctor called, but the doctor said he must have a woman in to nurse him and cook him proper food.

They sent the Widow Thing to look after him. She made him more comfortable than he had ever been, save for worrying about the cost of it all. She was there quite a spell and it was running into more and more money. When he felt enough courage to crawl out and feed his hens, and to do what few chores had to be done, he asked her what he owed her. Her figures staggered him, but he was game. Said he: 'Hadn't you better take the old carcass?' She wasn't quite sure whether he had said 'old carcass' or 'whole carcass,' but it didn't much matter, she used to say. 'Whatever he said I knew he was just trying to get out of paying me and I wasn't going to have that. I wasn't going to take up his proposal of marriage even if I was the first to ever get a proposal out of him. So I told him what I wanted wasn't him, or his money either, but just the money I had earned, my own hard earned money. I got it and no wol carcass!' "

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## The Brother'd Not Been to Boston

[for HARRISON FISK]

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IT has been a full generation since the simplicities departed from country life in New Hampshire. Now that nine out of ten of us have had our wander years the things of the centre have displaced to a large degree the things of the province that have the blessed tang of the soil upon them. The man who offers vegetables for sale at the side of the road is a college graduate who has taken his family by trailer to California. The country storekeeper turns his shop over to his brother from Thanksgiving to May Day and winters in Daytona Beach, telling you he cannot face the northern cold now he is an old man. The surveyor owns he would rather live in an apartment house in Boston six months of the year with a janitor to mind the fires than be getting up of nights to put harsh chunks of maple and beech into his furnace on the West Side at Conway.

It isn't only the cold or the easier living in the cities that drives the folks away from Washington or Groton or Alexandria—it's the loneliness and other folks moving away. Have for witness the selectman getting out the tax list in the town hall of Dorchester, that building with the sunburst over the door and close neighbor to the church with belfry so beautiful you bring your car to a stop before

it every time you pass that way. "You cannot blame the young folks for getting out. There is little opportunity here. It's hard, though, mighty hard, on us old folks to see them go. Look at this town. Seven hundred and two people here in 1830, two hundred and fifty in 1920, one hundred and fifty in 1930, and we've lost three this summer of 1937. You can't help wondering if we aren't pretty near the end."

In very lonely places, as between East Grafton and Orange, grown folks waved to us passing in our car as freely as did the children, so glad were they to see people passing. It has been ten years since I have noted anyone but children going barefoot. It was twenty years ago that an old man from Fryeburg way was outraged by having a crowd follow him in the streets of Portland along which he was padding without shoes or stockings. We were discussing such matters with the lady from Laconia and the gentleman from Franklin, wife and husband, fellow Germantowners with ourselves, as they were calling on us in Sandwich.

Said the lady: "Things were different forty years ago. There were a good many people about then, and they were neighborly, and they were many of them as simple as children. The way they took hold and helped in times of sickness and death! They came in and did the cooking and housework, and took the children home with them, leaving the women of the house free to get their mourning ready and to attend to all those funeral arrangements were so necessary in the country. Mother and father often spoke to me of how things were in Sanbornton. Father was talking to me once about the Snow boys. They were about eighty when he was about forty. He stopped in to see them, but only one was home. He recognized father. You couldn't forget father; he was six feet four and very dark. 'Oh, yes, I know you,' the brother who was at home said. 'You are



Jess Wallace's boy.' Father said: 'My mother will want to know which one of the Snow boys I saw. Which one are you?'

"The old man said: 'Tell her I'm the brother's been to Boston.' When father got home his mother asked him at once: 'Well, who did you see over in Sanbornton?' Father went over the list and when he told her what the Snow boy said, she identified him at once. 'Oh yes,' she said, 'that was Gaddiel. Caleb was never in Boston.'"

"If Caleb was never in Boston," said the gentleman from Franklin, "he wasn't so slow. Tell us how he came by your father's cigars." The lady settled herself comfortably tailor-wise on the floor by the fire, and proceeded: "Father smoked one cigar after another and was happy with only one brand that he had up from Boston. He always had sixteen in his case that folded over when he set out on a day's trip. He had smoked only four when he reached the Snows. As usual he stopped in for a chat. This time it was 'the brother'd never been to Boston' was home. He was dressed up bravely in bran-fired new overalls of a bright blue. Father took out the case to offer him a cigar. Caleb took the case. He took out one after another until he had four in the right front upper overall pocket. Father thought that would fully content him. He was shocked to see him go right on and fill the left upper overall pocket.

"When he had stowed away the remaining four in the rear right overall trousers pocket he handed the case back to father, who had no words left as he put it back in the big breast coat pocket he had especially made to hold the cigars. Father could meet most situations but this was one he had not met before. It had all come about so gradually. He was expecting each cigar 'the brother'd not been to Boston' took would be the last he took. Father, of course, never said a word of the joke on him. That it leaked out is

pretty clear proof to me Caleb was just trying him out, waiting for him to say something after he had taken two cigars. Father would have said, 'Take a couple! Take all you want!' for that was his way. All that mother noticed when he came home that night was that he did not smoke, saying he didn't feel up to it, and that he was busy with correspondence, probably writing to Boston to hurry up the order he had already sent in for more cigars. He was only the one night without them. They came the next day."

The last word on the matter was from "the gentleman from Franklin," who said: "Perhaps, after all, simplicity and subtlety were pretty nearly one in the country in old times."

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## Marriage Records and Family Registers

[for CLARKE E. VARNEY]

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ONE wonders to what extent the marriage certificate was a part of the ritual of marriage in New Hampshire. It had not apparently the standing here that it had, brilliantly illuminated by fractur, in Pennsylvania. The marriage entry was made in the family Bible as a rule, but nine times out of ten all the family record has been torn out in the Bibles put up at sales in old homes or in those volumes one runs across in antique shops. The only marriage certificate I have come upon is that of Albert S. Moulton of Sandwich who was "joined together in Holy Matrimony" with Sarah J. York on November 18, 1869. The officiating clergyman was Moses J. Cilley, who cancels the five cent revenue stamp necessary to the document "Nov. 18, 1869, M.J.C." in a clear hand.

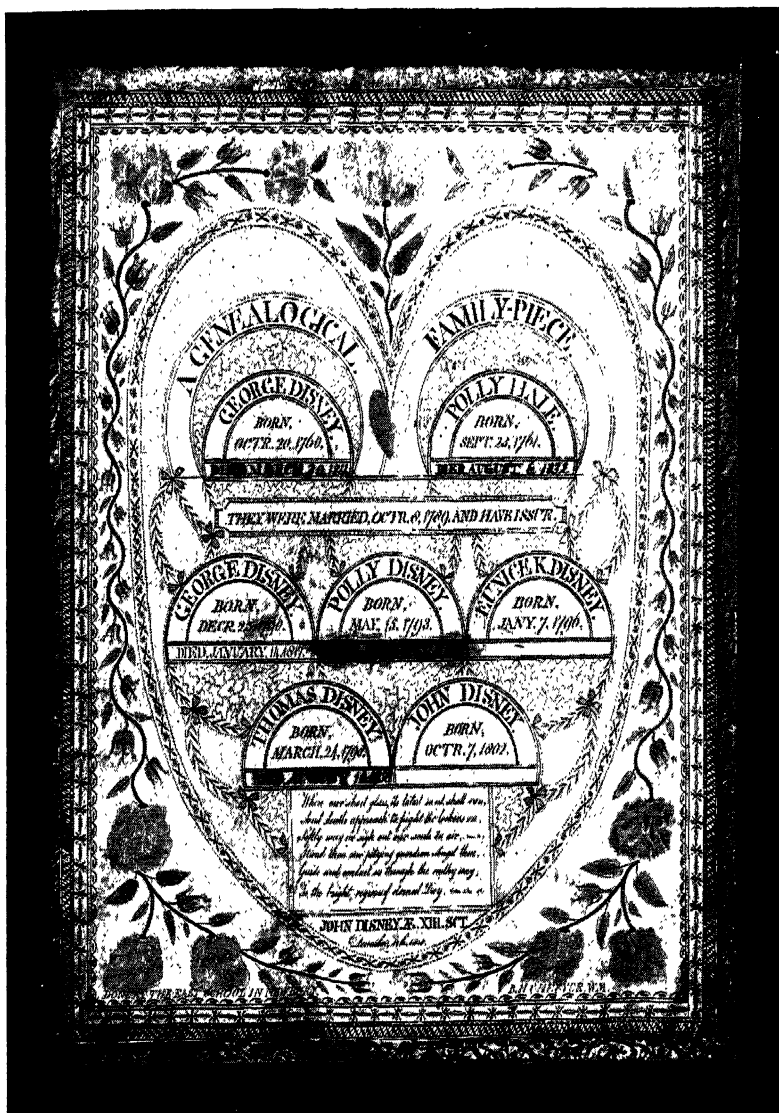
Whether Brother Cilley was responsible for the lettering of the hand done certificate I cannot find out, though he is remembered as a good penman. Both the hand printed and written letters of the certificate are a little trembly, old man's efforts seemingly, but shipshape, the work of one once a master of his art. The initial "T" of the "this" of "This certificate" is an ambitious creation. It is two and a half inches high and more than an inch broad. In the in-

tricacies of the volutions of its lower half a bird lurks, its wings half spread, the white dove so long allied with hymeneal rites, or one of the sparrows of Venus, who shall say? There is more than a suggestion of a winged cupid to the lower right of the bird. The Reverend Mr. Cilley duly records that the marriage was "In Presence of" two witnesses, Henry H. Moulton and Lizzie M. Moulton.

The certificate, nine inches long and seven inches high, has a printed border in faded purple of rope and urn design. It is preserved in a frame of older vintage than 1869, a frame of pine painted red that slopes down for a breadth of two inches to the nine by seven glass that protects the certificate. It is backed by a hand worked piece of pumpkin pine, a piece adzed out and chiseled down at the edges. Between the back and the certificate is a page of the *Sunday School Advocate* for November 10, 1860, folded double. Its two sides of print are crowded with proper sentiments, of a little girl who learned to say grace when she was eighteen months old, and of a little boy who carried bushels of oysters so successfully for a fish dealer that he came to be worth a half a million dollars. The creed of "God made the country and man made the town" was preached by "selections" printed in the *Advocate*. Here is "The Old Farm House":

The old farm-house, whose roof of faded red  
Is seen beneath the snow-white cherry trees  
That fringe it round, and slowly, sweetly shed  
Their floating blossoms on the whispering breeze—  
Is more enticing in its calm retreat  
Than stately mansions in the crowded street.

The illustrations in the *Advocate* show youths in top hats, deep v's in their vests, expanses of soft shirt front, and loosely fluffed neckties. A small girl making a man out of



THE DISNEY FAMILY RECORD OF NEWBURY,  
MASSACHUSETTS



snow is warmly scarfed and skirted. The broken off ends of horseshoe nails that fasten in the backing to the certificate have doubtless replaced the wrought nails that originally held it in. The general air of the whole affair is Victorian.

The pen work of this certificate is not so elaborate or so firmly executed as that we find on cards hand written, with birds on the wing and with ladies lolling among lily pads, with blossoming lilies beside them as they emerge Venus-like from the waves. Whether such cards are mementoes of visits to the cities or whether they were done by our local chirographers such as Christopher Fellows or Daniel Atwood, I do not know. We find these in old memorabilia boxes, both the hand written ones and those printed in imitation of handwriting.

There are hand written family records, some of them with crude sketches upon them. More often come on nowadays is the printed record. I have acquired "J. Lyford's Family Register, Thornton, N.H." It is seven inches high and five inches broad within a printed border of ornate design, Victorian in quality. A gilded frame a half inch wide about it is again enframed in that kind of carved walnut that is common in the frames of late lithographs by Currier and Ives. Where the carved walnut sticks cross at the corners, extending out two inches beyond the frame that encompasses the register, is superimposed a carved four lobed leaf in walnut with a half globe in its centre.

The record of the family runs:

JEREMIAH LYFORD

BORN MAY 3D, A.D. 1789

NAOMI LYFORD

BORN MAY 14TH, A.D. 1793

J & N LYFORD

Joined in Matrimony, August 27th, A.D., 1810

First-Born, June 4th A.D. 1811  
Katherine Lyford, born April 29th, 1813  
Third-born July 1815  
Albert Lyford, born April 15, 1819,  
died Oct. 1858  
Byley Lyford, born June 15th, 1822  
Jeremiah Lyford, born Oct. 19th, 1825  
Naomi Lyford, born Aug. 25th, 1828  
Eliza M. Lyford, born June 22d, 1832  
Ellen Lyford, born Sept. 10th, 1837

All we can say with certainty of the date of this register is that it was printed later than 1858, the date of the death of Albert. I should not wonder at all if this death had not brought about the printing. Evidently Jeremiah and Naomi were still alive, if approaching the allotted span of three score years and ten. It is seldom that you today see a family record of any sort on the walls even of old homes in New Hampshire. If you did I should hardly be writing about them here. It is well, however, that Tomorrow should be able to find out about Yesterday if it would, its little practices and ways as well as those it may hold less little.



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## The Matter with Jotham

[for C. H. INNES]

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THEY say Jotham were wanting. I don't know about that. He were smart enough until he got old and took in that stranger that inherited all his farms instead of their going to that cousin in Salem. Maybe, though, it was all the same to Jotham. He wanted to marry that girl. She used to come up here and summer and pay no board, but she wouldn't have him. 'Why, Jotham,' she would say, 'of course, I wouldn't marry you.' Jotham thought that was all the matter with him was that he was not married, and hadn't a house full of children. Mary, his sister, was a nice woman, but she would never let him marry. There were those would have him because he lived in a big house and had money and because his father had a big name in New Hampshire.

"But what I was going to tell you was how he picked up a good deal of money. He was close and hard-working and he never wasted anything. Nobody else could find such big beech nuts and nobody else was so good at lining bees. You saw that bee box sell. Well, he would find their honey five miles from where he began to line them. There was always twenty head of cattle here, forty in his father's time, and he found many uses for his oxen. He had horses,

too, but they were not so good at the particular work brought him in good money. They were too nervous for work on this hill.

"This was the post road in old days and there was heavy travel of all sorts summer and winter. This hill was hard to get up in winter, even for teams. They did not sand the icy roads as they do now. Jotham had a pile of sand always ready for use on this hill but he never put a shovel to it where he kept it dry in the barn until somebody was stuck. They do say he carried water out on cold nights and let it run down the hill to make it slippier. When a team was stuck and couldn't make the hill, he would come out with his oxen that he kept shoes on with little cleats on them like those on creepers, and with a wagon load of sand after them, and he would soon have the stuck team up the hill if they gave him five dollars.

"A fellow with a truck with chains on it came up here one winter to try to take the business away from Jotham after autos came in, but all that happened was that he had to pay Jotham five dollars to pull him out of the ditch at the side of the road. Jotham's oxen were about all that could negotiate this hill in winter. Did you see those ox shoes sold for five cents? They had sharp blades turned at right angles to the flat of the shoes at the back of the shoes. Those were the creepers. Jotham had put on them come late November and had sharpened as often as was necessary, until it come mud time. There wasn't too much the matter with Jotham."

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## The Arts of Joseph Hill

[for JESSE COTTON]

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THEY put up at the auction an oval frame, glass covered, with a wreath of hair in it. It brought only fifty cents. "That cost a good deal more than that when it was made," said the old man standing next to me. "It was made by Joseph Hill, who lived in the Philbrook neighborhood over near East Wakefield," he went on. "He made that other wreath of feathers, too. He used to tramp around the country from house to house when I was a boy. The folks would save up the hair for him, and the feathers, turkey feathers and guinea feathers and hen feathers, hawk feathers and grouse feathers and whippoorwill's feathers, and he would stay at the houses and work them up. The frames for them were got at Wolfeboro. He made designs in grains and grasses, too, wheat and rye and oats, that you see in frames like those hold the hair wreaths and feather wreaths, and he fixed up everlasting and other flowers for pieces to put on graves. I should not wonder he stuffed the bird under the bell glass, that red bird. Its background of leaves and grasses is like his work. And that rocking chair of turkey quills, that has his touch.

"Joseph Hill did a good business in his day, the seventies, and made money at good prices. And now, what took him

more'n a day to do, maybe two days or three, is sold for fifty cents, or only twenty-five. Why folks had parties just to show off what he made for them when I was young. After those pieces were brought home framed folks had the neighbors in to admire them. They were proud of them, and now nobody wants them, any more than they want these farms around here with good houses on them, farms where good livings were made in times I remember. They sell for next to nothing unless they have timber on them. They are falling down, those old two-story and a half houses like this one, where Joseph Hill stopped and made things that were twice as pretty as these things you see in the gift shops today. It's all too bad, but I can't help feeling folks will come to like the things he did when most of them are thrown away. If uncomfortable chairs and chopping bowls set up on legs are fashionable, why should not wreaths of hair be, and of feathers, and of dried flowers?"

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## Digging Potatoes

[for DORRIT BROWN]

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THERE is so much more to digging potatoes than the mere digging of the potatoes. The digging itself is good, the satisfaction, in even a dry season, of pulling out the plump and smooth tubers of good size, the look of the rows of them drying in the sun, the gathering of them into bags and baskets, the carrying to the dark bay in the barn, the spreading of them there—all these so homely and natural tasks and sights are good. So, too, is the barreling, the stowing away in the cellar, the sending south to Pennsylvania of these products of New Hampshire soil, of rock maple soil.

In the old days each of the three farms adjacent to ours on Fellows Hill had its own preferred and acclaimed variety or strain. George Gray to the eastward came originally from so far down east in Maine he said they had “to keep two niggers to get the sun up with a crowbar each morning.” He had brought with him a potato of knobby proportions and a blue black skin, his “niggers” he called them. Once when we ran short we bought a peck of them, and they proved very good indeed. Alvah W. Batchelder pinned his faith on a round and deeply pitted early potato, as rosy as Early Rose, which he called Quick Lunch. “Drop them

into boiling water in a pot," said Alvie, "and turn away as much as a minute to do something else, and they are all in pieces, crumbled so you can hardly gather them up. The trouble with them is they are most too quick to cook and go mealy."

Charles Fellows put his dependence on Mills Prize, being more faithful to that variety than to most things about his place. He liked to change breeds of hens, and to swap cows just for the sake of change, even if he did not get better cows in the swapping. As part of our seed potatoes froze in the cellar in that unprecedented cold of the late winter of nineteen thirty three-thirty four, another strain was introduced to our hill by Herbert Perkins. The Quick Lunch and Mills Prize would not cut up to enough pieces to plant the patch he had laid out so he planted six rows of some Green Mountainish looking potatoes that he had. All three varieties did well for us, though personally I have a weakness for the Quick Lunch. They run a fair size but not too large. You can eat a second one without sacrificing a second helping of some vegetable of a shorter season than the potato.

It is always surprising to me to come on a person to whom an apple is just an apple, and not a specimen of a known variety long familiar and esteemed for this quality or that. It is more understandable to find folks to whom a potato is only a potato, for the less decided flavor of potatoes gives them a less wide range of taste and quality. I know one man who wants his potatoes to have but one quality, waxiness. That he suffers a great deal from indigestion, which he labels by one name in one phase and by another in another, is axiomatic, and it follows as naturally that he is a valetudinarian who loves nothing so much as the contemplation of his ills.

Potatoes do, however, differ widely in consistency, and

in keeping qualities, and, consequently, in taste and wholesomeness. A potato is not just a potato, though not subject as I have said, to a wide range of individuality in taste. Our Sandwich varieties, Quick Lunch and Mills Prize, are easily told apart even in mid-winter. One potato has almost a chestnutty flavor, and another one is no more than an ingredient in a dish that takes its flavor from butter or gravy.

I dawdle a good deal in my potato digging, there is so much more to look at than the potatoes themselves. First and last there is the great crescent of the mountains, arched about us from Israel on the west to Chocorua on the east. Then there are the vesper sparrows that haunt the rows as they did earlier when I was hoeing, running along between them, and flitting off from the end of the patch with great show of white tail feathers. They scold me, too, for intruding on their hunting grounds. The bobolinks, now all a sparrow brown, light on the tasseling corn nearby, and spink and spank lustily. Two great birds circling high overhead may be the Squam Eagles or those from Long Island in Winnepesaukee, but they are too high and too silent for identification. The September sun, still warm, is flooding the shorn fields about with largess of light. The early frosts have browned the ferns and brake, and reddened the tops of the Canada plums. Spires of red maple stand out in the woods across the valley, their red in sharp contrast to the worn green of the other deciduous trees. Jays cry, and crows are vociferous as they go through a ritual of strange evolutions, gatherings and dispersings, risings and settlings in a flock some thirty strong. There is a heady air here on the high hill farm, and the wind fifes by shrilly, for all it is warm. The crickets are loud, and butterflies jerk themselves about eccentrically high in the air, monarchs and smaller

fellows of a like red. Fall is with us by all signs and intimations. Winter, too, is not far away, the moan the wind takes on tells us. Against it the potatoes are as definitely a protection as tight house and fat woodpile. They have taken the place of bread as the staff of life.



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## Purple and Pride

[for ANN BRIGGS]

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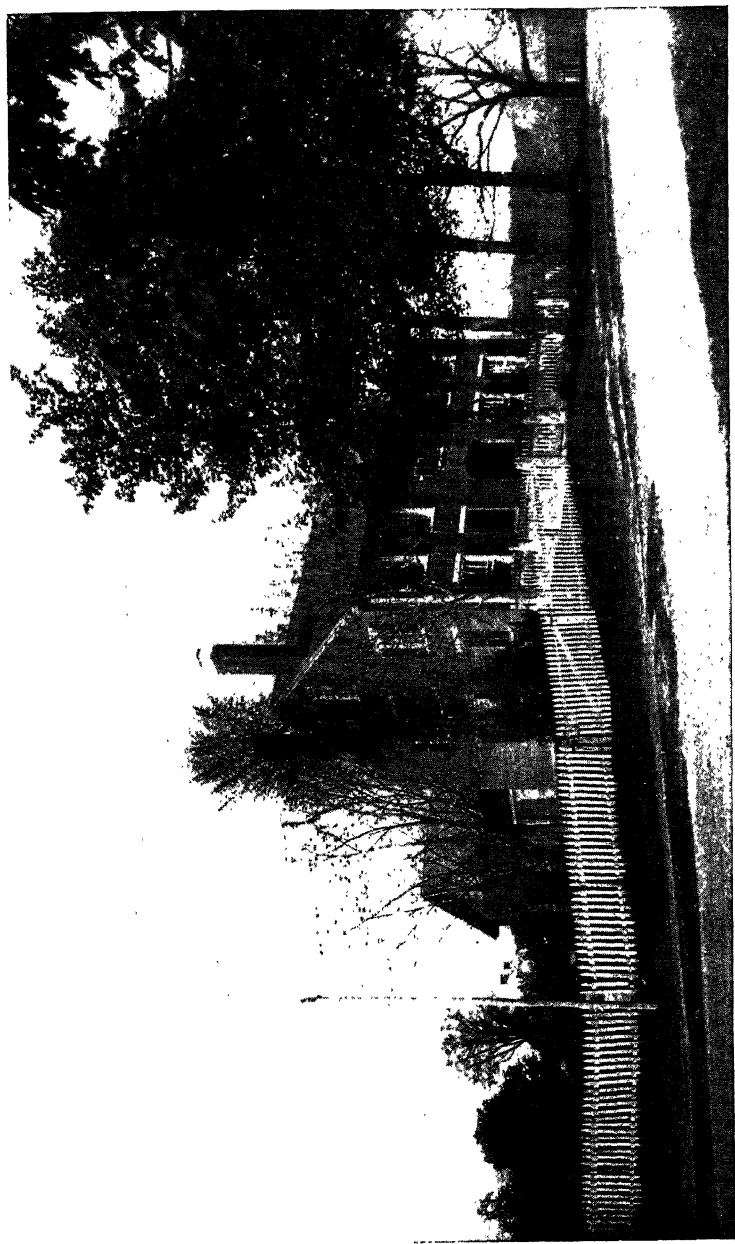
IT was because it was Saturday afternoon, perhaps, that the old lady had put on this particular purple dress. It was on Saturday afternoon people were apt to drop in, and strangers among them. It was her purple with a sort of plum glow behind the purple, a purple that symbolized pride *in excelsis*. Tall, angular, sharp-eyed, her welcoming smile and gracious mien did not disarm her. You felt here was a somebody, a woman of independence, of a stout heart, and, if need be, of a thrust of words to puncture the overblown confidence of any patronizing person. No sign at the side of the through automobile road by which she lived announced that she had things for sale. If people wanted what she made they might find it out by word of mouth from one to another. She needed their patronage to live, but she would bend to no vulgar advertising to obtain it.

She was working on a hooked rug that represented those three institutions of the New England village, church, town hall and school. The three stood in a row, flanked to the left by an elm tree, along a post road on which proceeded a coach and four with a dog racing by the horses. The four humans, in coach and road and window of school, were a bit conventionalized in their stiff quaintness. The dog had

action, though, and the horses were spirited. Those horses, they told us, were copied from photographs of horses that Muybridge had taken for Stanford of California. That series of photographs of trotting and running horses by Muybridge was, by the bye, the very beginning of what we today call moving pictures. None of the instancy and blatancy of the "movie" was, however, suggested by the rug. The village scene was laid on within a large shell, but what the outer border of the rug would be was only indicated. The outlining for it was partly drawn but only a sample completed in the hooking, to give the effect of the dark shades of old rose and tan that were to frame in the shell and the old time scene in lighter shades of those same colors. There were greens, too, in the rug but the dominant colors were the old rose that intensified toward maroon and the tan that deepened toward brown.

I was struck by the spanning of the States, of the Atlantic slope and of the verge of the Pacific Ocean, in the rug, horses as photographed in California being copied by an old lady in the interval by Peabody River. There is a poem of Robert Frost's, too, that spans the continent in like fashion. He wets one shoe in the Atlantic, on the Long Island shore if I remember rightly, and the other one in the Pacific, somewhere out of Frisco.

More native were the jellies and preserves and candies the old lady put up, currant jelly and wild strawberry jam and maple sugar fudge. Yet among the goodies, too, were things of outland origin, orange marmalade and chutney, the one suggesting Florida and the other far Hindostan. For most of us, I fancy, that other relish that owns an Indian origin, piccalilli, is more closely associated with New England. An auctioneer I know always waxes eloquent over those long troughs, hand hollowed from large trees, that more prosaically minded folks among us would call chop-



CURTIS HIDDEN PAGE HOUSE AT GILMANTON



ping bowls. He dignifies them as "piccalilli troughs" and cries them up as a "reminder of primitive days in Old New England." Go where it will a good thing is at home, sends down roots, makes itself part of native life, takes on local color.

There were other hooked rugs about the old lady's parlor than the large one on the frame. There was an oblong rug of checkerboard design in white and soft grey and red with one corner of it in under the square piano. This and its fellows were all of them rather better than most hooked rugs, a sort of household decoration it is easier to make ugly than any other such items except the not to be regretted afghans of yesterday. The rugs, however, were hardly as good in their kind as the various eatables in their several kinds. All were for sale, eatables and rugs, and more surely sold at good prices if their maker was impressively dressed, in royal purple warmed to plum. There was to be no charity buying here, no parading of poverty to provoke pity. What was on sale was to be bought because it was the best of its sort to be had. He who bought was made to feel, with perfect courtesy, that he had been privileged to be allowed to buy. And this home, thank God, is not the only one in back country America in which a gospel of the pride of life is believed in and lived. The faint hearted days are doomed once the old stock reasserts itself.

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## Wall Painting Round Wolfeboro

[for BARBARA BYRD and JERRE ELIOT]

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IT was in Middleton we first came on that wall painting that is so surprising a phenomenon of houses and inns and churches in Middle New Hampshire. It was in the second story of the town hall, a second story that had been a church for almost a century. There the end of the church beyond the pulpit and both sides of the long room were decorated with Eden trees in green and purplish blue against a background of buff, Eden trees that bore bunches of grapes instead of the so called apples that so tempted Mother Eve. After having seen this decoration and talking about it we began to hear of others, painted under all sorts of circumstances and of very different effects. One of these was in a house in Tamworth, a house that had once been an inn. It was painted, so the tale ran, by a travelling artist who found himself benighted there without funds and worked out his scot by painting the view of the Sandwich mountains as seen from the inn on the walls of one of its rooms.

Then we heard of a similarly painted room in Portland, in Maine, and of another over there but nearer the New Hampshire line than Portland. Then it was reported there was another such room in a house at the foot of Wentworth

Hill in Sandwich. Then we were taken to the Rust House in South Wolfeboro and shown a room and a hallway so painted by an Avery, it was said, and then to the Irving Gilman house over towards Brookfield. The decorations in these two last named houses are alike enough in certain details and general effects for you to assign them to one man, but there was a considerable difference in feeling between them. In the Rust house the high mountains are Chinese in contours, seemingly a development of the mountains on a tea box we bought after we had seen the room in the Rust house, at the auction at Samuel Avery's in Wolfeboro. This Samuel Avery was the grandson of Samuel Avery who founded the family hereabouts, building a house by the side of Winnepesaukee in 1812. Some hold that he, the original Samuel, was the painter of these decorated walls.

The initial impression one has of the room in the Rust house is of mountains and trees in blues and green against a background in buff. At first glance one wonders is it wall paper or painted wall? It may well be that the elaborate wall paper of many of the old houses in New Hampshire, some of it imported from England and France, carried the suggestion for these wall paintings by Avery. The Franklin Pierce house of Hillsboro Lower Village, dating from the earliest years of the nineteenth century, has a French wall paper in the room to the left of the front door. The hall has been redecorated with a design in stencil running around its doors and along its sides just below the ceiling; and its right hand room with a stencil design copied from one in an old house on Sulphur Hill. It was very evidently felt that a house of consequence should have wall decorations of some kind or another. Even in the humblest homes bluing or cobalt from the dye pot was put into the lime wash used to cover what part of the walls were plastered. This plastered part was in many instances surprisingly scant, so prodigal

was the use of pumpkin pine in feather boarding and panelling.

In the Rust house the painting is found both below and above the chair rail and is very dextrously adapted to the spaces between the windows and to the mantel piece above the open fireplace. The whole room is one because of the color scheme followed and because of the recurrent motives of trees and mountains. Within this general scheme the spaces between the windows have the effect of panels. Here is a group of trees. There a building held to be one on the campus of Dartmouth at Hanover. Next comes a weeping willow panel. Then one with the Statehouse, supposedly, at Concord, and a bridge. Always there are trees with now a bird conveniently perched on one. The Eden grapes prominent in the church at Middleton recur here but blue water in one place and yellow grass in another and the human figures differentiate it sharply from the church painting. A man on a stone bridge fishing suggests the otherwise occupied man on the bridge of Canton plates, but water meadows and a martin box and shooting at a target give a contrasting effect to a neighboring panel. The eagle on a public building over the mantel vindicates the staunch Americanism of that panel.

In this same house is treasured a sign that used to swing from a pole before an inn, supposed to have been painted, too, by Samuel Avery. On one side is a snarling panther in dull yellow, crouched by a pond in which is a tulip-like lily. Over him appears "S. P. Horne, 1838." On the other side is a picture of the paddle wheel steamer, *Lady of the Lake*, that was the predecessor of the *Mt. Washington* that for so long ploughed its way around the circuit of Winnepe-saukee.

The general effect of what is original in the painting of the walls in one room of the Irving Gilman House has none



of the Far Eastern effects of the Rust house. The painting is lighter in color, its general tone being buff and green, and the whole lacking the unity of the painting in the Rust house. Part of the painting in this room was destroyed when they took out the great chimney in the centre of the house. The new wall here was decorated with a great mountain done by a commercial artist in a Boston store. He made no attempt at consonance with the old painting by Avery.

Here again we have the Statehouse at Concord, with a mountain in the background. This is on the east wall. On the north wall, to the right, are cedar-like trees, a dog and man, and a lady with a harp. To the left and on around the room appear a man with a gun, a tree with a bird on a high branch, a grove of trees and a girl with a dog, a steep-roofed house, a girl feeding chickens, green trees and a fence nearby. Over the fireplace is a cathedral, said to be Notre Dame. About all the buildings and human figures are trees, trees in dark greens and in lighter greens, trees of all shapes and sizes but disposed about parklike places and none in the serried ranks of forests.

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## Red Swarms

[for FRANK G. SPECK]

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NEVER before I visited the shell heaps by the Damariscotta River had I visualized pre-Pilgrim America as a country crowded by humans. These shell heaps are, however, so high and broad and long that people in great numbers must have accumulated them, and through centuries on centuries. Tons and tons of oyster and clam shells from the great banks have been quarried out, excavations show, and carried away, to be burned into lime, I suppose, or to be ground up for fertilizer. Across the water from you as you make your way down the mounds of shells from the eastward are other shell heaps twenty feet high for a hundred yards along the river shore. On the side on which you stand the great piles you have just descended rise more than fifty feet above the high tide mark, but whether they are for the whole height of shells, or whether of shells piled on glacial drift, there are no excavations deep enough to show.

Crumbly and dry, they seem unutterably old, immemorial, these mounds of shells, like the wind in the pines upon the mounds, like the thin skirling of the herring gulls, like the bland sunlight that fills all the world from shorn fields of

green, and white heaps of shells, and dull grey water, to the diffused blueness of a far and cloudless sky.

Despite their suggestion of an antiquity so old as to be out of history, there is nothing in the shell heaps to dwarf the mind. They are not so old as to stifle all speculation as to who made them and when. After you have dug boulders out of your fields year in and year out, and hauled them to the fields' edges on a stone boat, making your single walls double, you have learned that most of the boulders are pineapple-shaped, with their points just breaking out of the ground and their broad butts deep in it. The boulders are all pitched southeastward, showing that the glacial drift that deposited them here was from the northwest. They have been so long, though, without human association, that you cannot associate them with men of old time, even if you have a lively belief in pre-glacial man on the Atlantic slope of America. It is easier to see men of antiquity on Salisbury Plain, dragging in and erecting the great slabs of rock that make the circles of Stonehenge. Yet the tall trilithons are incredibly old, as are the cliff dwellings in the gorges of the Colorado. A great cairn like that of Queen Maeve, on the headland south of Sligo Bay, is of the age, perhaps, of the old Irish stories of the Red Branch cycle. It has not, though, the suggestion of age, or of thousands and thousands of men busy in its making, as have the Maine mounds by the Damariscotta. You have found so many arrowheads and skin scrapers of jasper all through the Delaware Valley that you can repeople the mine pits of Rattlesnake back from Durham Furnace where they were made by old Indians firing the ledges and chipping out the precious implements.

So, too, you can repeople the banks of the Damariscotta with swarms of red men at work digging oysters and clams and feasting upon them. Did the Indians come here only in

the late spring when the ice went out of the brackish river? Or did they live here in permanent huts all the year round? One can only guess at answers to such questions. This only is certain, that Indians must have been here in their thousands a thousand years for the making of such heaps of shells. It was long, long ago their making was ended. There were no oysters dug from this Damariscotta River from the time of the British settlement of the coast of Maine until this year of grace nineteen hundred and thirty-five when there was great rejoicing over their refinding there. So the making of the shell heaps was over by 1607. It may well be the supply of oysters was exhausted before that, and the coming of the Indians here for their seafood orgies a thing of the past long before white men made their homes hereabouts. There are no great trees on the shell heaps, those growing there being no older, any of them, than fifty or sixty years.

None of the learned in such matters are willing to postulate approximate dates between which the great heaps may have been piled here. The shells do not, for the most part, lie in layers, but seem to be edged in on one another rather confusedly, as if one part of the deposits at this height or that was made now and another part again. They are obviously piled here by human agency, and not by the sea as the shell banks in the marl pits of New Jersey. A wild guess might put the piling from 400 A.D. to 1400. The human bones and pottery and arrowheads found in the heaps are such as are found on village sites known to be occupied in historical times. There is nothing, save a resemblance to the kitchen middens on the Baltic, on which to base speculation as to a possible Scandinavian origin for the mounds.

No matter what the mounds suggest now and again your last thought of them is that thousands of red men must have shared in their making. It is in the numbers of In-

dians their proportions indicate, that their impressiveness lies, as well as in their so obvious antiquity. One arrowhead found in a cornfield conjures up for you, perhaps, an Indian there on the trail when this so long cleared land was forested, a brave seeking vengeance on an enemy in the autumn bannered Indian summer, or a hunter tracking a moose day after day through the crusted snow. These shell heaps bring before you a river and riverside, thick with Indians, in dugouts raking the coves for oysters, or wading for clams at low tide. You see innumerable little fires on the shell heaps, fires indicated now by the charcoal deposits here and there at all levels of the mounds. Perhaps those fires lasted on into the night and all the shell heaps were studded with little glows like a swale with fireflies in late June.

Antiquity on the Atlantic seaboard had for me, before my visit to these shell heaps by Damariscotta, a sense of loneliness, of a few men afoot in waste land or wilderness, on ice floes or by wide waters. If by chance the suggestion was of Indians at the labor of planting or harvesting rather than travelling or hunting or fishing, they seemed lonelier so employed in their isolated clearings on burnt land or bare tundra, the work of their hands feebler and less effective, in contrast to the riot of grass all around them, than when they were padding busily onward about their concerns through unpeopled ways. Here, however, on the white heaps by the grey tide, were acres piled high with shells, proof of the industry of hordes of men and women and children for untold years raking oysters and clams from the river shallows.

There were few signs of the present day occupancy of the land by men, the paths down among the piles of shells, the hayed fields higher up the hill, a white gable through dooryard maples a quarter of a mile away. Salt heather,

its grey stems dusted with infinitesimal flowers of blue, was at our feet; seaweed stirred in the sluicing tide as it rushed inland by the bouldered beach; the white shells grew whiter and whiter, as the sun reached the zenith at high noon. A sense of happy labor by hosts on hosts of Indians, sharp set for seafood, of red swarms for generation after generation on the white shell heaps, made itself manifest, kept itself insistently before one's consciousness, would not out of visualization. The millions on millions of shells of oysters and clams gathered and eaten in the grey of a yesterday long, long ago peopled America's pre-European years with red millions unimagined before. This land of ours we were wont to consider virgin before the coming of our people must have, here at least, been crowded with jostling throngs. By Damariscotta America knew not a lonely antiquity, but an antiquity of teeming life.

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## Ladies of Spirit

[for MRS. ALONZO R. WEED]

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THERE are even today places in New Hampshire where the speech is direct and simple and at moments picturesque. The jargon of the city newspapers and the studied correctness and savourlessness of the school teachers came too late to effect the talk of the oldsters. In such places we make no distinction between Miss and Mrs. Mis., the abbreviation of that good old designation "Mistress," serves us whether we are addressing maid or matron. I explain thus because I would have it known that not only the old lady of Tilton with the daughter has the dignity of years and responsibility of descendants, but also the old lady of Middleton.

The old lady of Middleton loves a story as she loves a prayer meeting. The trouble is prayer meetings in Middleton are rare. The one church, once a strong unit of the Free Will Baptist persuasion, is open most years no more than one Sunday of Old Home Week. It is a place of pilgrimage, though, for back in 1841 its walls were painted about in a long fresco of Eden trees, which the artist of that dead time imagined as of brown trunks and limbs and green leaves. Only those trees in the choir end bear fruit. That fruit is not the sinful apple as I have explained above, but

the comforting grape in bunches of black lusciousness. In the midst of the grove of trees at the choir end he inserted, as if it were a device in the centre of a shield's quartering, a crossed trumpet and harp. Back of the throne from which the preachers of old time thundered is a canopy in red and a gold that time has much subdued. The old lady of Middleton is as fond of visiting this old church at eighty-one as she was at eighteen. She likes to think of her ancestors who worshipped here and to sit in the box pew in which they sat and were uncomfortable, and to try to think as they did of God and man. This she can do, though, as I said, hardly more than once a year, so most times she goes to church it must be when some neighbor takes her to that Rochester that seemed so far away in horse and carriage days and is so near by automobile today.

The old lady of Middleton must, perforce, fall back on stories when prayer meetings are so hard to come by. She likes particularly to tell you of energy and resource on the part of ladies only less old than herself. One of the heroines on whose readiness of answer and courage she likes to descant is Mary I. Jeffers of Province Pond. This old lady lived not long ago in a lonely place with only a school house for neighbor. As do most folks who live in story-and-a-half houses hereabouts, she slept on the first floor. One morning when she went into her kitchen there was a strange man sitting on the sofie.

"Good morning?" said the old lady.

"All that I want to hear from you," was the caller's rough answer, "is where you keep your money."

"All right," said the old lady, who had edged toward the buttery door. "Wait a minute and I'll get it for you."

She pushed the buttery door to, while she took a loaded pistol from one of the buttery shelves. She opened the door, pointed the pistol at him and said: "Now you had better



move on." She didn't wait for him to reply but fired. She aimed to miss. The man, who had left the kitchen door open, bolted out of it, and away with him. The old lady kept on firing, and finally hit him in the calf of the leg. He was slowed up a mite, but he still made pretty good time out of there in a sort of a hop, skip and a jump gait. She had tried to hit him this last time, she said. She wanted him to remember her and not to come back.

The old lady of Middleton told with even more zest another episode of the old lady of Province Pond. Mis. Jeffers was awakened one night by an automobile light shining into the bedroom window. She slid out of bed, crawled along the floor, put both hands on the window sill, and raised herself up. As she came to her feet she lifted both hands above her head to open the curtains so as to have a chance to see who the intruders were from a point of vantage above the flare of the automobile lights.

"Jesus Christ!" said a man's voice. He was doubtless appalled by the apparition in white, with arms extended batwise in the window.

"No! Not Jesus Christ," said the old lady, throwing up the window, and the words at them in her sweetest tones. "Not Jesus Christ, but Mary!"

The lights swung away as the car backed around, and sped off into the night, its occupants doubtless too shocked to reply.

As I told these two tales to the Deacon, he blinked. "Those are the sort of yarns you would expect from a man from Sandwich," said he. "They are inhuman. Our folks down Tilton way are human, and warm hearted. Listen, now, to the consideration and thoughtfulness for others and unselfishness and Christian kindness of Mis. Pray, an old lady of ours. She urged my wife and me to call. We went over and found her and her daughter in. It was a properly

fashionable call, timed so we reached their house just at half-past eight. At a little before nine the old lady said to her daughter: 'Mabel, I think we should go to bed now, so that these good people can go home!' "

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## The Moon on Foss Mountain

[for THE STORY TELLER]

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WE had been delighted with the gift of two dried ears of Bourne corn. We would plant their kernels come May and have in a few years another thoroughly acclimatized strain of seed for our garden. Our Quick Lunch potatoes have been grown on this hill for over thirty years. They keep in our cellar over winter and yearly produce a heavy yield. Our tree of strawberry Porters by the piazza is of native stock grafted on to a lusty apple that sprang here without will of ours. It was a minor tragedy when the desolating winter of 1917-18 killed a vine of Concord grapes we thought was well established here, and when the Flemish Beauty pear tree well up in years and inured to our windy hilltop was broken off by a twister.

As I talked of this strain of corn to a neighbor he moved about uneasily. There was evidently something on his mind. If I paid no attention to his nervousness I thought he would out with what was troubling him. He did out with it, and in this fashion:

"That awful nice corn of yours reminds me of thirty years ago, yes, that and more, for it was horse and buggy days. Working out over in Eaton I met a pretty girl. Her name was Nancy Bourne and she lived on Foss Mountain.

She was working out, though, then, on the same farm I was working on during haying. You could hire a horse and buggy in a livery stable then for two dollars a night. When she invited me to a dance at her father's it was up to me to get the team. I did gladly, though you did not get four dollars a day haying then. Those folks, the Bournes, were great dancers, great talkers, great workers, great drinkers, great fighters.

"I'll never forget that drive. It was uphill and downhill seven miles to Snowville, and then straight up, and up, and up. It was full moon early but we did not get through our chores and fixed up for the party until nine o'clock. The moon was high when we started up Foss Mountain. There were no lights in the few houses on that climbing road. I daresay the folks were all in bed and asleep when we passed. There were several little things happened. An owl screamed and scared her and she sat a little closer and grabbed my left arm. She slipped her hand through my arm and held on to it, at first timidly, and then tighter, as she found it more secure that way. It was as bright as day with that white moon high in the south. The road seemed to be climbing straight to heaven. I was sure that's where we were going when she sidled close to me and looked up at me out of those deer's eyes of hers. She was a lovely girl.

"It was all too soon we reached the driveway into her home. We could hear the fiddles going, little fellows and big bull ones. Good old tunes, too, and not like the trash comes over the radio of nights now. It was downhill for five or six rods, maybe more, and then sharp uphill around the barn. The barn was not full up with hay yet. They had tidied it up, though, and had big oil lamps with reflectors hung so that, with the doors at both ends of the threshing floor open to the moonlight, it was most as light indoors as out. My, that hay smelt sweet. I did not enjoy the dancing on the



MT. WASHINGTON FROM THE SACO RIVER

*by Russell Smith*



threshing floor, though, as much as that drive up mountain with Nancy in the buggy. That moon just melted your heart all to sweetness. That is as near heaven as I'll ever get.

"It was hell, though, when the hard cider some of the boys were drinking set them to fighting over the girls. I did not get into any fighting, but the way her brothers were going on sort of shamed Nancy. Yes, I drove her home to where we worked, with the moon still in the sky but coasting west toward daybreak. It wasn't the same, though. She was tired, and troubled over her folks' fighting, ashamed of them, you know, and thinking maybe I'd think little of them. We never drove out together again. I went home after haying. I haven't seen her since. I don't know whether she's still somewhere in Eaton, or in Lynn, or in Sacramento. Maybe she's dead, maybe she's a grandmother. I hope she's alive. I'd like to see her again. I was never so near heaven as driving up Foss Mountain with Nancy right into the moon."

## Trifles of Old Years

[for JOSEPH CARTLAND]

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IT is difficult for newcomers to an old countryside growing up to brush to visualize it a community of close-set and prosperous farms. All you can do to help them see Robbin Hill in Chatham as it was yesterday is to take them, say, across the Maine line to a countryside in which there is even today a living in farming, in raising corn for the canning factories. And at that you will be taking them from hill farms to interval farms. Yet there were once many homes on Robbin Hill. In the houses tight against wind and rain and boreal cold above what are now but cellar holes gracious living and gentle ways persisted for two and even three generations from the settlers of the seventeen-nineties.

An illumining sidelight flashes meagrely on refinement in the wilderness in the sketch of Asa Eastman (1770-1818) that is the last item but one in the *History of Carroll County* (1889). Asa hunted and trapped about "The White Hills" and fell in love with the valley of Cold River in Chatham. He was also in love with Molly Kimball, of his home town of Concord. They married there and travelled to their home in Chatham on horseback. This was in 1796. "The little log house," writes the scribe, "they made their home in in the forest silences was a great contrast to the civi-



lization they had left, but in after years she often said that here she passed some of the happiest years of her life." From this home went out a son to Bowdoin and distinction in the law in Maine.

It is equally difficult for strangers passing a farmhouse left with no near neighbors and in cleared land hemmed all around with forest to realize that here may be heirlooms brought from tidewater a hundred or more years ago, blue Staffordshire carried up in saddlebags from Kingston, a chair of English oak come over the Atlantic in the seventeenth century, a great beaker of Stiegel glass with doves and tulips etched upon it. Get the son of yesterday's country doctor of Chatham to tell you of all the surprising treasures he saw when he was invited into the houses on zero days in which he was making the rounds with his father in his sleigh. How had the old forbears of the people of this house gotten that William and Mary highboy up from Saco? By an ox-drawn pung, probably, in winter, when the snow made the rough roads smooth. Was there a local cabinet maker capable of that chest on chest with the broken arch at the top? And what was that warming concoction of rum and milk they poured steaming into a toddy glass of Stoddard with a silver spoon in it to take up the heat and prevent the glass cracking? How well he remembers the gipsy looking skillet of copper they poured it from, a shining affair six inches high, four inches across at the base, with concave sides narrowing in to two inches and a half at its high waist and expanding again to three inches at its overhanging rim? How clean it poured, and how hot its long handle of brass was in the hand of the old lady delighted to minister to the small boy. It girds that doctor's son to think that only a cellar hole with lilac bushes close by remains to mark the place where was so much kindness and culture and well being.

At auctions the old finery brings little, but there is spirited bidding for it at low prices. Mothers want it for their children for rainy day dressing up and playing grown-ups. At an auction a great girl of fourteen was so eager to see herself in a skirt and corseted bodice and close-fitting hat of black silk she struggled into them with a complete absence of self-consciousness and was only brought to blushes and a realization that folks might think she was play-acting by the applause of the little crowd. There is always surprise when an auction at a lonely house reveals choice lace and Paisley shawls, a high hat in a case all the way from London, royal Canton china and the choicer Nankeen, a complete set of the presidents by Currier and Ives, a folio Sir Thomas Browne and a super-folio *Whole Duty of Man*.

An unpainted house under the Ragged Mountains will give you a miniature gold mounted, deserted Dorchester a high comb of tortoise shell that would grace the most aristocratic coiffure, Alexandria a Cashmere shawl, North Stratford colonial costumes that had had place at an Inauguration Ball. Humbler things that speak care and refinement and cultivation are, of course, more often come upon, autograph albums, rewards of merit, patterns for weaving coverlets.

E. A. Gardner, Eliza Ann Gardner, made her own autograph album. It is good work for a girl of fourteen, as she is written down at the front of the book. What was she like, "E. A. Gardner, aged 14 years?" There is a pleasant primness about the floral designs she drew and colored for her friends to subscribe their names and sentiments to. The title page shows a variation of the familiar urn of flowers design. From a block at the bottom across which "Eliza A. Gardner" is inscribed in bold writing with flowing flourishes to the final "a" of the first name and the final "r" of the last, rises the urn in blue with ringed handles. Two sprays of

tulips, each with a full blown flower bending inwards and a bud bending outwards, rise from the urn. They fill fully half of the eight by four page, and lovingly enclose the word "ALBUM," embellished with curlicues in quill work.

If we do not know anything of Eliza personally we know her friends had some of them good taste in poetry. Twelve lines from Wordsworth's "Green Linnet" are the first entry in the album. The illustration in color at the head of the page, probably the work of Eliza, is of a green bird with pink wings feeding three young in a brown nest. The nest rests on greensward from which rises a flower in blue, possibly a hyacinth. The next little watercolor is of a butterfly in yellow and deep pink resting on a green stem. The verses here, too, are in consonance with the picture, of vanity and grandeur and the triumph of the butterfly and worm and locust over man. The lines on a following page are in pencil and too faint "for perusal."

A scroll and quill and two leaves outlined in pencil on a subsequent page have no verses along with them nor has the quaintly executed spider's web on the next leaf of the book. Like most autograph albums one comes upon, this album is but an attempt at an album, a suggestion of an album. Such affairs are begun to while away dull hours, or because others have them, but the impulse dies down, and they are laid aside and eventually forgotten. Further on in the book is a wreath of flowers in pink and rose and green about a ribbon and folded envelope, and on a leaf beyond two beehives in white on a red stand on green grass, and about the hives eleven bees in black. On a page of pink paper further on in the book a rose and bud amid leaves are outlined, and still farther on one beehive, in white again, rests on a white stand engarlanded with flowering sprays in red and yellow. One solitary black bee crawls up the hive, like the two others, a straw hive of proverbial shape.

Her sister Marion indites four stanzas of six lines each on a page of yellow paper. They are as gloomily Victorian as the most lugubrious heart could wish. No verses are appended to the flower and bud in purple among green leaves on the next leaf. Turning over a page we find marvellous printed writing under a picture of a bird in red and green swinging on a ring hanging on a leafless grapevine heavy with blue grapes. The plaintive note of early Victorian times sounds loudly in these verses:

Today, the forest leaves are green,  
They'll wither on the morrow,  
And the maiden's laugh be changed, ere long,  
To the widow's wail of sorrow.

The lady who writes lines under the flowers in pink and light yellow takes them for roses. There is the cheerless note here, but it is not Simon-pure. The "bridal" creeps in along with the "bier." The blank page under the next water-color design in pink and red and black, a scroll and arrow and flowers, is not filled in. Before one finds another design, turning over the pages one by one, he comes on a tiny spray of some aromatic herb, rosemary for remembrance shall we say, and wonders what may be its story: "Mary" only moralizes, instead of mourning in her verses, "To a Young Lady," with "wants and wishes few." A yellow aconite heads a blank page. "Elizabeth" signs verses on "The Transplanted Flowers." A scroll with rose and wreath in pink and green; a bow and quiverful of arrows and a torch, in red and purple, yellow and black; and a bent bow with two arrows crossed, all in black: have no attendant verses.

And so it goes on with only four more entries and seven more little designs. The book is tastefully bound in red boards, with a gilded basket of flowers in the centre and corners of dark brown paper with an embossed scrollwork



PENWORK OF YESTERDAY



upon it. Its pages are chiefly of white paper, but there are, too, the pages of pink and yellow paper I have referred to, and other pages of green paper, none of which are bepic-tured or bewritten. One wonders the origin of it all. Was the art, if art it is, passed on traditionally from mother to daughter? I think so, for this album does not have about it any suggestion that it was school work, either in classroom or out, as do certain other albums I have come on in New Hampshire. The drawing of the billing doves and flower pieces at the page tops and the slender and attenuated hand-writing take us back to the days before the Civil War. Those of us whose mothers were girls then will find in the little book and all it connotes the charm of faded things and a gentility it would be better the world had more of today.

The Victorian lady gave me a little lithograph, six and a half inches by five and an eighth inches, of a girl holding three birds in her hat. She is in low neck, with great puffed sleeves to her green bodice, red skirt, white pantalettes and yellow shoes. Her belt and hat are yellow, too, and there is a yellow band to the bottom of her skirt. Her short hair is curly, her eyebrows arched and her mouth of the plums, prunes and prisms variety. In contrast to her placidity is the sweeping and lordly curve to the great white plume in her hat. This lithograph was given to my friend's mother down Portsmouth way by her teacher, E. J. Stetson, as a reward of merit.

More usual are printed forms with "Presented to \_\_\_\_\_" and "by \_\_\_\_\_ Inst" or "Presented to \_\_\_\_\_" and "By \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher." These forms are often colored, their flowers daubed more or less exactly in red, when they are roses, the flying flags patriotically red, white and blue, and the clothes of their playing boys and girls or mother with daughter at knee listening to old tales, yellow or green, red or blue as fancy dictates. One "Reward of Merit" rep-

resents boys playing ball with a bat shaped like an Indian club and a ball nearly as big as their heads. The boys are long trousered. Round about, for a frame to the ball game, are open ledger and great quill, anvil and hammer, "terrestrial globe" and anchor, sheaf of wheat, eagle-surmounted stars and stripes flying, and a tall Greek column. It would seem that it was Miss Clara Remick the reward of merit was presented to by "Marie E. Gannett, Teacher," but the girl's name has been rubbed to faintness. That happened, perhaps, when the family parted with it. You find old books with the fly leaf at the front torn off and Bibles with the "family record" between old and new testament torn out, practices dictated by the family's unwillingness to have the world know they have parted with their possessions. It is a curious manifestation of pride and one that militates against our detailed knowledge of the trifles of old years.

Another reward of merit was presented to Mary Remick "by Helen Berry, Teacher." They are good names both, as is Gannett, too, in our country under the Sandwiches. This latter slip of paper is printed from a very worn block, so worn I cannot tell whether the girl at the left is playing the violin or hugging a basket of flowers under her chin. Rather better as art is the copper plate of a school building, an old academy of the sort that used to flourish in Effingham or Lord's Hill.

Puzzle cards and puzzle books were, too, a part of life in early Victorian times. *The Columbian Riddler* was published in 1835 by Moses G. Atwood of Concord. A sample conundrum not too hard to guess for those who know the Capital city is: "Why is Concord Main Street like Merrimack River?" The answer is "Because it has a Bank on both sides." This is but one of many "juvenile and toy books, all embellished with beautiful pictures" gotten out by the same



publisher and "all selected with a studious regard for their moral, useful and instructive character." Christopher C. Fellows had puzzle cards, printed for him in those old days in which he ran a drug store in Centre Sandwich. One sports a tulip in green at the top and is inscribed with the name Jonathan Fernald across the bottom.

One of the more unusual finds in old attics is the "draught cards," giving the patterns for the various designs for woven coverlets. A whole little boxful of these turned up in Dover, but had made its way there from Shapleigh, Maine. Though I have been all about Shapleigh and have passed many signboards printing the way thither I have never motored down its village street. I have followed that narrowest and roughest of numbered highways, 203, from Province Lake to West Newfield, but somehow escaped taking more propitious looking roads leading to Shapleigh. Route 203 is a road of a sort a friend of ours was contemplating on the way to Madison. Said he to a girl in a car parked by the entrance to the road he thought of taking: "Does this road go to Madison?" She replied promptly and with finality: "Yes, the road goes there, but you may not if you take it." I have been in Alfred, Springvale, Sanford, Newfield, Limerick, all the Parsonsfields, even Middle Road, Acton, Acton Corners, but never Shapleigh. Now, however, I have conned and conned the "draughts" of Mary Baker and her sister "Daty" I intend to make pilgrimage there.

I could, of course, look up these patterns in the books on coverlets, but they are far away from this remote farmhouse in which I write, and I must content myself with the names of the patterns on the draughts so suggestive of old beauty from near and far. The first one I pick up is the largest. It is backed with old linen and it is filled with numerical notation of levers on the loom. Its title is "The

Rose of Sharon," and following the title the name of its owner, "Mary Baker" and her place of residence, "Shapleigh." The next I happen to take out of the little box, lined with old wall paper, in which they have been, I should guess, for a century, is "Desert Flowers." There follows "Mary Baker's Draught." The next bears no title for the pattern, only "Mary Baker's Draught." The next bears the legend: "York Diaper, Mary A. Baker." Shapleigh, I should note in passing, is in York County, Maine. This pattern, like many of them, is about six inches long by two inches high. "The Rose of Sharon" pattern was nearly twelve inches by nearly seven. The next, ten and a half inches long by two and a half inches high, is labelled: "Gingerbread, Mary A. Baker, Shapleigh."

The next I pull from the grab bag is: "Double Rose Diaper, Theta Baker, Shapleigh." The next is a big fellow, twelve inches long and more than four high. Under the pattern is "Ring of flowers, Data Baker, Shapleigh, Maine." On the back appears the legend: "Theodate Baker's Art." Someone in old time had no doubt of the place of such work as art. Is the Theodate Beedel of the next draught, Sanford, our Daty Baker, married, and moved from village to town? The design is "Ladies' Plaid," which last word Daty spells without the "i." Daty, indeed, was no speller, Edinburgh appearing in the next pattern as "Eddingburgh" in "The Flower of Eddingburgh." The next I come to, sewed together of two strips of tough old linen paper by silk thread unrotted by the years, is "Rose of Sharon" as laid out by "Daty Baker." Under the notation of the pattern appears "Theodate Baker's Draught, Shapleigh." Daty has backed "The Indian's Review" with another piece of heavy paper.

The next three are all Mary Baker's: "The Ladies Delight"; "Dammass Diaper"; which one guesses to be "Dam-



A VASE OF FLOWERS IN TINSEL



ask Diaper"; and "Clover Leaves." This is the most fully legended of them all, its complete lettering being: "Clover Leaves, Mary A. Baker, Shapleigh Her Draught." Two of obvious later date, on more modern paper, are the one unlegended and the other labelled "N. H. Beauty." This last is in an old lady's trembly hand. Did Mary marry and go to Dover and turn again to coverlet making in her old age? "N. H. Beauty" is, I take it, "New Hampshire Beauty," and proof, perhaps, of a Maine lady's loyalty to the state of her adoption. There are three periods represented by the "draughts," that of a hundred years ago in the patterns of Mary and Theodate Baker of Shapleigh; that later period when Theodate Beedel of Sanford did the two draughts. The third period is that of the New Hampshire Beauty and the unnamed design. The paper on which the notations are made grows progressively poorer, but the worst of it is as good as the best of paper now.

Inconsequential as many of the trifles here considered are, they all suggest a life not only more leisured than ours, but one in which people had a real interest in quiet things. One did not then have "to get a kick" out of pastimes to consider them worth while. Families were large enough to bring in many interests through their many members. In work and play both they were self-sufficing. There were jacks of all trades in the family, and what one could not do another could. This variety of interests avoided the monotony of today when most of us are so specialized we can do only one thing. We have to do that one thing over and over again until we are bored doing it. Now the half of us have little interest and no pride in our work, and the prospect of more regimentation ahead augurs a worse monotony for future living.

Yesterday in the country all the men were at the same time farmers and lumbermen and road workers, and each

one with a trade in addition. This man was a painter, that a cooper, the third a potter and cider maker. There was an infinite variety on the farm, with work that changed with the seasons. The women's work was as various. There was dish washing always, and cooking and the tending of children, but there were sidelines that changed with the seasons. There was the planting of the kitchen garden, the preserving of the berries and fruits as one succeeded the other from June to November, the spinning and weaving and rug-making, the candle dipping after slaughtering, the working at all kinds of knickknacks for the decoration of the home. We were all of us too busy then to know what it was to be bored.

It was a life richer, a life of more culture, a life of wider horizons than we have now. And when folks needed an escape from the daily round, as all of us must have from time to time, there was religion to give us wings away. Of all the attic trifles, those most revealing are the old letters. Putting aside the troubles over money and health that are the burden of so many of them, the leading motive next in evidence is concern with religion, what the new minister is like, why the old one would not do, what is the writer's hope of heaven. The humblest home was then to half who lived there the threshold to the golden paved streets and warm sun of heaven.

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## The Northeaster Comes

[for JAMES WELCH]

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AT dawn the whole world was a monotone of grey. No white was in the east to herald daybreak, only a less intensity of the sooty grey of the overclouded sky. There was no glow in the east, no glint of brightness from a sun about to rise, only a thinning of the heavy pall of grey. The wind was northeast. It boded rain. That rain was long in coming, though. Scattering drops fell a little after eight o'clock from low flying scud. There were suspicions of showers at intervals. It was ten before there was any steadiness in the falling of rain. By noon there were downpours now and then, with pauses in which the pattering was so gentle you could barely hear it on the attic roof. There were longer periods of steady rain as the afternoon wore on. By nightfall, on that sudden closing in of the dark that comes with September, the wind rose.

I went up to the attic after supper, as my custom is on nights of storm, to listen to the rain on the roof. I stretched out on the bed I had slept in as a child, and pulled over me the warm coverlet woven from the wool of my grandmother's sheep. I could not at first hear the falling rain for the fising of the wind about the gables. That fising was very other than the moan was about the house when Charles

Fellows called the next afternoon after it had cleared. It was finging, whistling, buffeting when a heavy gust met the eastern ell and slithered up to hit the higher gable of the main body of the house. Pretty soon, though, the rain became a downpour and drowned out the wind, or stifled it by uniting with it in a blend of sound in which the drive of the rain was dominant.

The wind fell finally, the storm developing into the northeaster the oldsters around believe to be almost a thing of yesterday. Squire Fellows says there are no more three day northeasters, and he was rather surprised at one that lasted a day and a night. It came hard as I lay there with my head not six feet from the pelted shingles, then softly again, then hard again. This northeaster was but a succession of showers. It was now a gentle slipping of water down the shingles I could hear, now a determined drive against them. It was stormy all night and until ten the next morning, a full twenty-four hours storm, but lacking the intensity of the old three days equinoctial that would drive in from the wild Atlantic for full seventy-two hours without cessation. Our one day storm ended when the wind changed to west and a drying sun burst forth to give us a glittering world.

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## The Mormon Mecca

[I.M. LOUELLA LEWIS]

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THE most impressive thing I have seen in Vermont is the shaft of Barre granite that marks the site of the house in which Joseph Smith was born. I had no intention of visiting it. I knew in a vague way that it was somewhere in Vermont but it was West Randolph we were seeking, because I had this summer of 1937, at an auction in mid New Hampshire, run on a primitive painting of it as it was in 1851. A sign at South Royalton pointing straight uphill informed us that here was "The Joseph Smith Birthplace." A long round lay ahead of us and we hesitated to make the side trip. I do not know what made us make the ascent. None of us had any affiliation with Mormonism. I had been brought up on stories of Mormon proselytizing among my mother's relatives. In youth I had met but one Mormon, my cousin Louella from Utah, who could have made her living whistling on the variety stage. I remembered how my black and tan howled as she sat down at the piano and played and whistled "Io Son Titania." Wickedness and grotesquerie were my associations with Mormonism.

Some of my forbears in the Rhine Valley must have come from the Bavarian Alps or Switzerland. My heart never leaps up as it does on mountain pastures, high sheep walks

and cattle walks where the air is rare and I can look off from well grassed fields to other mountains over against these whose alpine-like meadows I tread. Up and up we went, by great old farmhouses where the folks had once been prosperous. There were livings to be made here yet, but not very generous livings. You could tell that by the fact the clapboarded homes needed repainting. Finally we turned right, through an avenue of maples close to forty years old, ran by an old graveyard, and came out into an undistinguished flower garden. A house equally undistinguished hid so much of the grey shaft you were not particularly impressed by it. Rounding the corner of the caretaker's house you caught the granite against hill pastures higher than those about you and then against the sky.

There is restraint and dignity in the wording of "the martyrdom" in the Middle West of Joseph Smith. "How young he was" are the words that spring to your lips involuntarily as you read he was killed in 1844 at the age of thirty-nine. There is nothing of real dignity in the "finding" of "The Book of Mormon," but you feel that this that was his dwelling place on the high farm was a fit place for visions to come to a child of God. I was looking more of the time at the view from the walk about the monument than at the monument. A half mile away, and higher, were cows on a pasture that shared a mountain top with a tall woods. There were hayfields here, too, stone walls, little creeks for water for the beasts. Three pastures in all I picked out higher up the mountains, each with grazing cows. It was a pastoral life from which Joseph Smith came, as pastoral as that which developed the prophets of the Old Testament. In our American life so little concerned with dignity, it was a real reassurance of the inborn dignity of man, this simple shaft and its laconic wording.

The Mormon Temple at Salt Lake City left me cold. The

high shaft of granite on the high hill in Sharon warmed me to the bottom of my heart. The countryman in me had joy in the quiet and aloofness of these pastures so windswept and sunny. What part of us wonders and knows awe in thought of the why and whither of mankind had deep satisfaction in the simplicity and verity of the life from which the man Smith came. With no more than toleration in me for Mormonism as a creed or way of life the restraint of this memorial of its founder gave me a respect I had never had before for men who held to the creed and way of life.

Thirty years ago trainloads of the disciples came to the foot of the mountain and made their way up to the memorial. The folks round about, anti-Mormon almost to a man, did not like the speaking to the crowds, or their sleeping there on the mountain top in the hope that they, too, like their founder, might see visions and hear words spoken from the clouds. The pilgrimages were discouraged, and there are few of the faithful that climb the mountain now. The Mormon Mecca is little visited. Men are nowadays bowing down to gods even stranger than he who told his secrets to Joseph Smith.

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## Our Closeness to Creatures

[for LEROY PARIS]

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YEAR by year there are less and less contacts between man and creatures in America. Nature study in the schools, valuable as it is, and the much visiting, or at least the much running by car through farmland and wild places we all do, does not take the place of that familiarity that existed when a large majority of Americans were farm born. Cats and dogs are still the preferred pets for children, but, relatively to the population, there are fewer and fewer of them in our cities as time goes on. Fifty years ago you saw flocks of pigeons in the air wherever you went in suburbs or country, but now those you see are mostly confined to the squab farms. That symbol of country contentment, "commons," or Antwerps, or fantails, sunning themselves on stable roofs or barn roofs of winter mornings, is seldom come upon nowadays. Stables there are few of today, and the devotion to gardening in the suburbs and in those country districts within easy access to the city markets makes these enemies of peas and lettuces none too popular where there are truck patches in the neighborhood of the barns.

City children see so few horses they make a fuss over those of the mounted policemen and over those that some bakeries and distributors of milk yet retain. Pigs are so

generally unknown that a Labrador retriever of ours looked inquiringly at the first one he was introduced to at our neighbor's in New Hampshire, and then at us as if questioning if it was a sort of thing which should be killed. I knew a college professor who was proud that he kept a great boar so cleanly in his town stable that its presence, not allowed by the law, was never discovered for the two years before he moved it out to the country. The piggeries that long were a nuisance in certain near city districts, just outside of Philadelphia and New York for two, are gone for ever.

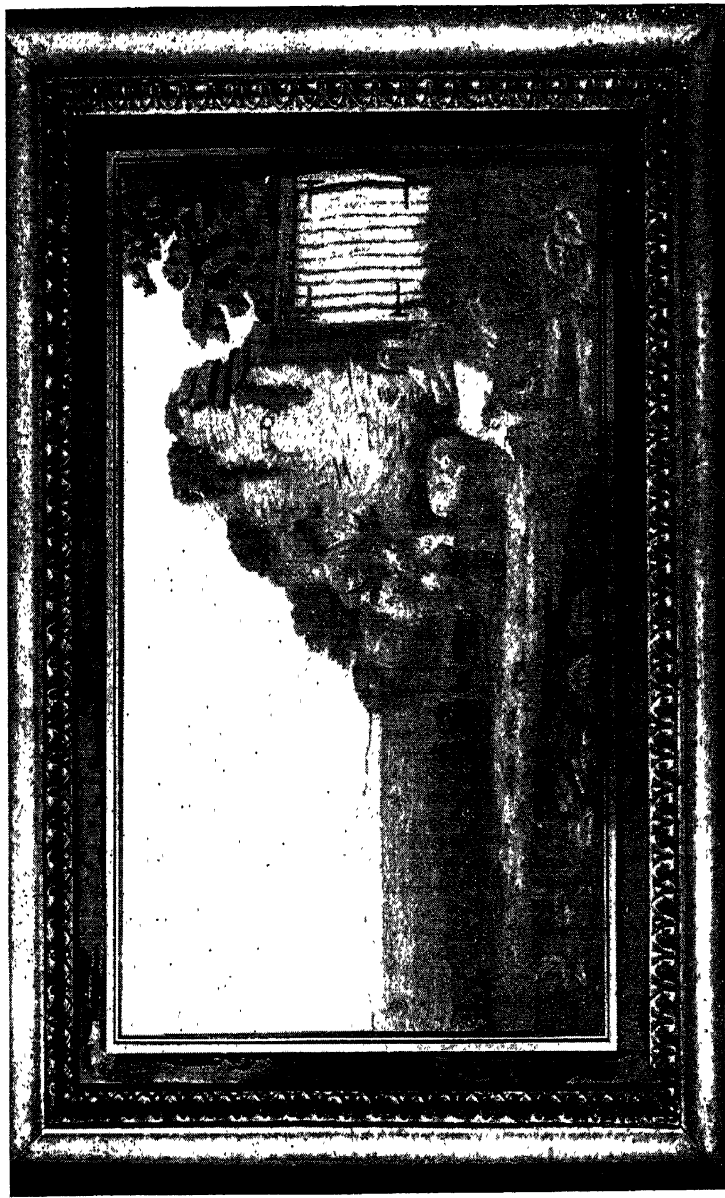
Pet shops are fewer than they used to be and do not do a business at all commensurate with the growth of urban population. Old colored women no longer sell tortoises and toads along the city curbs for people to take home to keep snails and thousand-leggers and daddy-longlegs out of the cellar. You do not hear canaries vociferating everywhere in the cities as you used to hear them. Rabbits are less generally cherished as pets since varieties of them are everywhere used for food, and guinea pigs have lost their appeal since they have come to be regarded as primarily creatures to be used in medical research. Apartment life, too, has had its share in the diminution of pets.

For all the loss the early settlers suffered from the depredations of wild beasts they felt a closer kinship with them than most folks do today. Two old books I picked up in the summer of nineteen thirty-nine attest to this. Both have a share of stories of wolves and bears, more of bears than of wolves, the bears taking the place in our backwoods life that wolves took in the life of wild places in the home countries of Europe from which our forefathers came. The Rev. Grant Powers, A.M., C.H.S., published his *Historical Sketches of the Discovery, Settlement, and Progress of Events in the Coos Country and Vicinity* at Haverhill in

1841. This book is about, not Coos County, as you might expect, but about the "Coos Meadows," the interval lands along the Connecticut of which Haverhill in New Hampshire and Newbury in Vermont were the centres. The record is of the years between 1754 and 1785. The particular item that shows a boy's reaction to a lonely night in the forest, surrounded by wild creatures, was furnished the good clergyman by Richard Wallace. It is concerned with an experience of 1769. Here it is in the words of Wallace:

On the second day's journey from Hampstead, N. H., I . . . found a large tree fallen, on the side of a knoll, the butt end lying up from the ground, leaving just room enough for me to crawl under. . . . I soon fell asleep. . . . When I awoke I was very cold, as there was a hard frost that night. Besides this, I found myself saluted from all parts of the solitary and dreary wilderness, by all the animal inhabitants of the forest, like a band of instrumental music, the wolves taking the chief lead, and carrying the highest notes: or something like a base-viol and bassoon in their different strains. They did not appear to be far off, but did not come near me to offer any violence; yet their noise was some alarming, and very disagreeable, since the whole region of the forest seemed to be alive with these different kinds of animals. By and by, somebody cried out over my head, and barked like a little dog, then again screamed in the voice of women, and laughed out like parrots. I had not learned their grammar, nor to raise and fall their notes, for I was but a boy from the sea coast, and had never heard the like before. But I thought I would not make any disturbance with them, if they would let me alone until morning. But as soon as morning appeared, I crawled out from under the tree, and suddenly screamed with all my might, "Stop your noise!" I was immediately obeyed. And behold, the noisy creatures over my head were no other than great owls, roosting upon a branch of a tree!

It is of a domestic animal, though, that the good clergyman tells a real tall story. It is of a cow driven from Portsmouth over to the Connecticut at Charlestown and then up to Haverhill. Contented for a while on one of the sweet-



PICTURE IN SATIN STITCH AND FRENCH KNOT





grassed meadows of Haverhill, she disappeared. She was traced by Indian runners to Coventry but no further. Finally, after several months, came word she had turned up in her old barnyard at Portsmouth, nearly a hundred and seventy miles if she followed the way back by which she travelled up to Haverhill.

The Rev. Grant Powers tells us a real backwoods tale of two boys, one armed with an axe, killing a huge bear. He ends this story with this observation: "My only remark in the conclusion is, that others may kill bears, and I will record their deeds." This tale is recounted as if it were a tussle at nooning at school between two small boys, in earnest at the sport but hardly in dead earnest. One of the boys kicks the bear down when it tries to climb up a ledge and the other finally sinks the axe into its throat.

Of three bears killed at Thetford by Joel Strong the reverend raconteur observes: "As they had been lovely in the eyes of each other in life, so they were not divided in death." It must have been among the people of Coos Meadows he found this kindly attitude towards the beasts. He did not find it in *The Bible*, where those beasts that are not regarded as unclean are never referred as creatures fellowly with man.

As an appendix Rev. Grant Powers tells a remarkable tale of a boar, the head of a herd of swine, encountering a huge bear, after he had already killed one almost as large. In *Incidents in White Mountain History* (1856) by Benjamin G. Willey, we are told of the taming of wolf cubs by Ethan A. Crawford so that they would speak for their food like dogs. We hear, too, of a kindly and considerate moose, which, meeting a horse and sleigh, with husband and wife ensconced in it, in a narrow trackway through the snow above the Crawford House, jumped over "the whole concern, horse, sleigh, man and woman."

We are told, too, of a man coming on "five young beavers sporting in the water, leaping upon the trunk of a tree, pushing one another off, and playing a thousand interesting tricks. He approached softly, under cover of the bushes, and prepared to fire upon the unsuspecting creatures; but a nearer approach discovered to him such a similitude between their gestures and the infantile caresses of his own children, that he threw aside his gun."

There are three "strong farmers," as they call men of broad acres under good tilth in Ireland, in the town of Sandwich, but there is only one of the three of the old sort. By the old sort I mean men who wrote for the farm papers, who were sought out as judges at cattle fairs, who were sent to the State Legislature as representatives of agriculture. The truth is that agriculture is passing with much else of the old order, from the country between the Sandwiches and the Ossipees. Here and there, a man who has made his pile in the cities, plants out a great orchard; or keeps his paternal holdings up to the level they reached in the days of the grandfather who made his living, and a good living, from them; or builds great barns and cuts his hundreds of tons of hay for the good cattle he breeds.

None of these latter men are really farmers at all. They are but playing at farming. It was a downright surprise to me, under present day conditions, to see put up at an auction in Centre Harbor, a book nearly as big as a Bible, with a picture of cattle as frontispiece. I hoped this would prove what the farmers of the old school would have called a "georgical dictionary." On its being knocked down to me for sixty cents along with a dictionary recently peddled about the country, I found it was just that, though it bore at the head of its title page, *The Farmer's Encyclopaedia and Dictionary of Rural Affairs* (1850), an English book by Cuthbert W. Johnson, Esq., F.K.S., adapted to the United

States by Gouverneur Emerson. It was printed in my own city of Philadelphia by Carey and Hart.

On the inside of its front back was the name, not of the man whose goods were being auctioned off, but of "Amos H. MacGregor, Derry, N. H., N. H. 4th Reg. Co. I." How it had worked its way up country one can only guess. On the fly leaf I found the name of Esther R. Graves, a local name. Some one back along had used it as so often you find a family Bible used, as a repository for pressed autumn leaves, and pressed ferns, and pressed bouquets. The bouquets are of pansies and some herb and a little white flower I could not identify.

That it is an adaptation of an English book, as are so many of our dictionaries and books about the ailments of creatures, horses, cows, sheep and swine, emphasizes the bond still existing between the mother country and her offspring. It is interesting to find here an extended account of Ayrshire cattle, as well as of the Devons and Herefords already strongly represented on our farms. It was a half century later that these same Ayrshires took a real hold on the American fancy and began to find a place among the two or three cows kept on the little hill farms of Sandwich.

The book was recast for America before the creation of the Plymouth Rock, Wyandotte and Rhode Island Red fowls, the American breeds most prevalent in the next half century after the book's publication. It was published in the days of the first large importations of Asiatic hens, the Chittagong and Langshan and Malay, and the other large fowls that gave us our Brahmas and Cochins and Indian Games. It is the White Dorking that is cried up as the most desirable of all barnyard hens.

The account of sheep reads like a roll call of famous sections of Britain. We run over the list in part: Leicester, Teeswater, Lincolnshire, Cotswold, Dartmoor, South

Down, Romney Marsh, Cheviot, Dorset, Shetland, Hebridean and Merino. It was this last named variety that we in America went wild about. It was a craze, comparable only to that over the silkworm, *Multicaulis*. Merino and *Multicaulis* literally swept the country. Of swine, the Berkshire holds first place in the estimation of the authors of the book, and it is still the preferred breed in New Hampshire. A man from Hampton, way down on New Hampshire's short coastline, who stopped in the other day selling home-cured hams, boasted they were all Berkshire hams. He raised Berkshires himself, and the men he bought from in Jackson and Colebrook raised Berkshires.

A portly volume of 1165 pages, bound in black leather stamped and gilded, it shows on its cover a knee-breeched man in Quakerlike hat sowing grain. He is striding along, throwing the seed out from a bag slung across his shoulders. To his right a team of horses ploughing climbs a hill, to his left a Cape Cod house, with the tallest of tall chimneys, pours out smoke profusely. It was evidently a book that vied with the Bible and Webster's dictionary for the place of primacy among a household's books. It was well-thumbed when it was MacGregor's book, and, I take it, became the repository of pressed bouquets with sentimental associations and pressed autumn leaves and pressed ferns when it came into the possession of Esther R. Graves.

What most surprised me about the book is that its frontispiece, a colored lithograph, was allowed to remain in it. It represents three Short Horned cows, two white and one brown, on a green sward rolling down at back left to another Cape Cod house with a great chimney at the end toward us. It was done "on stone" by J<sup>s</sup> Queen and produced by that master lithographer, P. S. Duval of Philadelphia. I am tempted to take it out of the book, frame it, and hang it on the walls of this old house of ours, whose barns housed

over a hundred tons of hay cut on the place, and wintered forty cattle. There was concern with creatures here, cows, oxen, sheep, swine and hens, in that long ago before the mechanic got the better of the farmer in the New Englander.

A good deal of the china in daily use in "The States" before the Civil War came from England. A child's cup I have, in what the antique business calls Leeds, has pictured upon it, against a background of rock and water and trees, a very mild looking "American Black Bear." The child that drank its milk out of this cup felt such a creature would be soft to pat. "Goldilocks" could not scare such a child away from cherishing the dream that bears were fellow creatures.

The initials "W.B." and "C.B." are scratched so rudely on the powder horn you wonder the man for whose names they stand could have any pride in such lettering. The horn has thirty-two devices upon it, seven of them of creatures, three wild, and four domesticated. The domesticated ones are a swarm of bees, a dog, a turkey and a horse, represented by the head only. The wild ones are a fox, a fish, a snake. The scratcher of the design showed he was aware of things nautical, but who shall say whether at first hand or from his schoolbooks? He represents a sloop, an anchor and a harpoon. He shows his familiarity with the backwoods by a canoe, a tomahawk, an arrow, a powder horn, and a Kentucky rifle. Farmland life furnishes him with a head of wheat, a jug and an hourglass. Certain other objects can hardly be referred to any category, three hearts, two pistols, a sword, a tent, a mace, two moons' faces, a man in peaked cap, a double triangle, and a four-petalled flower.

The wild creatures depicted in numbers on some powder horns may be symbolical of what game the owner of the

horn hopes to bag or what he has bagged. They reveal a life in which wild creatures were man's familiars, even if he had no regard for them save as objects of the chase. Perhaps the attitude was that of a successful hunter I know in our corner of New Hampshire. "It's a kind of madness takes hold of me come fall," he says. "As I watch the deer down by Ossipee Lake in summer while we are living down there, I just couldn't kill one of them. Even when that hunter's instinct has me in its power I am glad it is against the law to kill the moose over in Effingham Swamp and I have to let them live. But when the season is on for the deer I just have to have one, especially if it is a well-pronged buck. It's only then I can understand the sheriffs with notches on their guns for the men they killed. It's likely, too, that most of the beasts one brings down are a decenter sort than criminals. There are none around here but have the most peaceable intentions towards man, woman and child. How whoever killed that tame moose down in Ossipee could have done it, I just can't understand. Perhaps he, too, had that lust to kill come over him. There are times I am not proud of that killing instinct."

It is only when oneself has suffered from the depredations of crows and hawks, foxes and bears, that one can see the reason for such bounties as prevailed for the destruction of these creatures in the long ago. So far as I know, we have bounties only on hedgehogs and bears in New Hampshire nowadays. You are paid twenty cents for each hedgehog's nose you turn in, and ten dollars for a bear's. One hedgehog got our dog in trouble, Hunt thinking it something that should be killed, and killing it at the expense of a mouth and throat full of spines. The bounty on this creature, of course, is for his damage to young evergreens. As you climb Whiteface you will find, some years, the ground fairly carpeted with the spruce tips he has let fall as he pastures on the tops

and high branches of the low trees toward the mountain's summit.

The only damage the bears have done us is in breaking down the lower branches of apple trees. This happens in the fall after we leave for the southward, and is no doubt the work of a mother bear bringing the apples within reach of her cubs. In the summer of 1937, when the blueberries failed on the mountain ledges because of a drought, the bears were driven down to the lower hills for the chokecherries and whatever else they could find there. Their sign showed they had been within a hundred feet of our house, after the cherries that have grown up on the site of the original log house the Fellowses threw up until they could build the house we live in now.

Crows some years, as this year of nineteen thirty-nine, take toll of our corn, and I have seen both the blue pigeonhawk and the marsh-hawk pounce down upon and carry away our young chickens. It may be certain other young ones that disappear are picked up by a fox, or, it may be, by a neighbor's cat. Now that we have no dog all the predatory creatures visit us with less impunity than when Hunt was about to scare them off by the mere knowledge that he was about. The foxes come mousing into the southeast hay field and the cats visit us from the north woods just as if they were the wild ones we now and then hear wailing there.

In two boxes of old papers kept by selectmen, one at New Chester, now Hill, in the eighteen-twenties, and the other at Wentworth, in the eighteen-seventies and eighteen-eighties, are records of bounties paid to citizens of those towns. In one of the receipts from New Chester we find:

New Chester June 29, 1829

Received of John Dickinson one of the selectmen  
ten cents bounty on one crow.

John Dickinson Jr.

The boy had held up his dad for a crow he shot, perhaps on that selectman's place. One wonders how it happened the other payment for crows was made on the same day as young John's. It reads:

June 29 1829 Received of Sewall Dickinson selectmen thirty cents for three crows heads

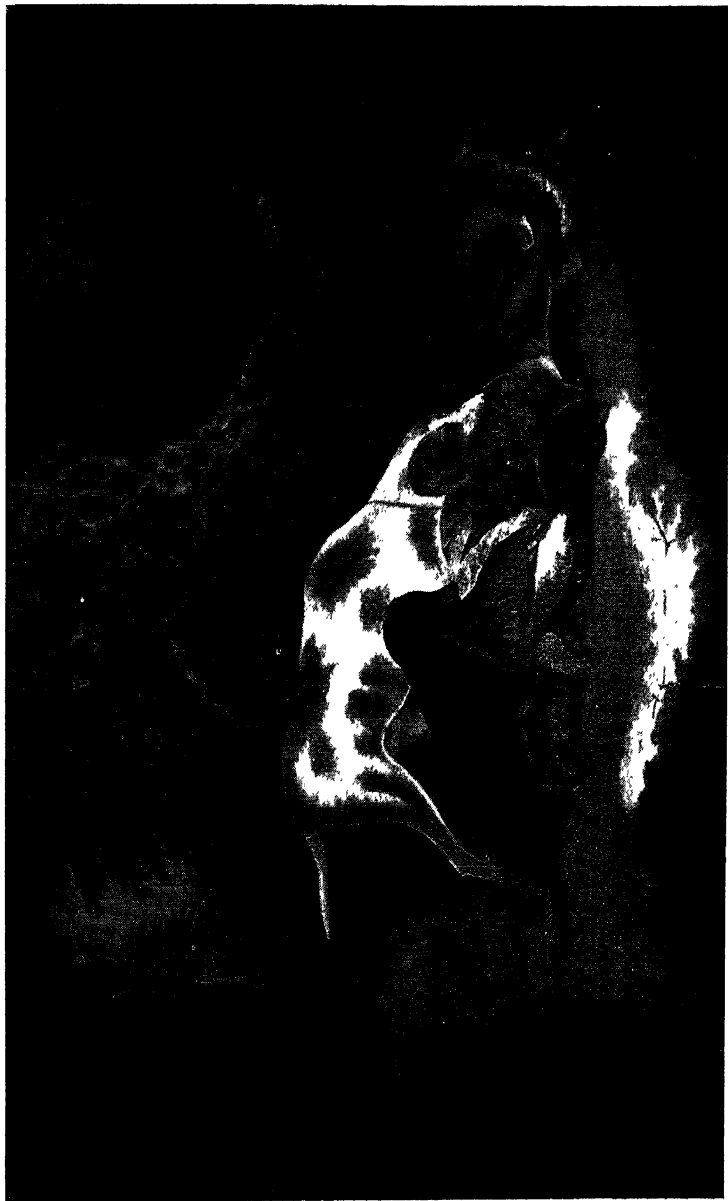
Park P. Tyrrell

It must be John Sr. had a middle name, Sewall. There could hardly have been two Dickinsons Selectmen in New Chester at one and the same time.

Fifty years later are the receipts to men of Wentworth for the killing of hawks, foxes and a bear. Crows apparently are no longer eligible for bounties. The hand of Uriah Colburn must have been firmer on the gun than in signing his name for him to have shot four hawks as the receipt dated Wentworth, Feb. 20, 1878 records. But it may be he set steel traps on the tops of posts and thus brought the Cooper's hawks, or goshawks, or whatever hawks it may have been he lusted to kill, to an ignominious end. On the same day, Feb. 20, 1878, another Colburn with a trembly signature, James F., signed this receipt: "Received of the Selectmen of Wentworth twenty cents in full for bounty on one hawk killed in this town." N. B. Foster was in the hawk killing business in a bigger way. He, too, writes in an old, old man's shaky handwriting, but in this instance both the receipt and the signature: "Received of the selectmen of Wentworth one dollar & sixty cents bounty on Hawks Feb 26 1880." Eugene S. Sanborn received three dollars and fifty cents on seven foxes. Daniel A. Foster had three days earlier received a like amount "on seven foxes." A year later D. A. Foster bagged only one but he put in his bill and got his fifty cents.

E. K. Webster tops the list of bounties paid in Went-





A PRIMITIVE OF 1880



worth for eighteen seventy-eight with this payment: "Wentworth July 30 1878 Received of the Selectmen of Wentworth ten dollars bounty on one bear killed by him in said town." This was more than the total paid in one list for hawks and foxes, \$8.50 in all, and all but as much as a list totalling \$11.20 for sixteen foxes and sixteen hawks. In Wentworth, the old saying there's luck in odd numbers did not hold.

Certain assets are ours here in the New Hampshire highlands: a well of water of the best, sweet and cold; air with a tone to it; good neighbors of the human sort. Not the least to treasure, though, are the wild creatures we are privileged to have about us: the doe so deep colored as to be almost red that crosses our berrying ground of late afternoons; the eagles that now and then leave their haunts on Squam, and spire up and up till they are as high above us as is Whiteface; "Grandma," as we call her, that bobtailed chipmunk that is the most industrious of animals and that has garnered what grain our chickens reject, summer after summer, for three years now; the swallows that greet us so cheerily as we open the barn of mornings; the big-pawed big rabbit we pass on the road; the red toad that lives in the tomato patch. It is doubtful if any of these creatures regard us as of any importance in their lives. Certain it is, though, that they are part of our pleasure in life. Their comings and goings, their bustling importance, the hard work they do, make us forget ourselves. And in forgetfulness of self are some of the happiest moments of life.

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## Echoes of Old England

[for WILLIAM E. LINGELBACH]

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FEW days go by in New Hampshire without echoes of Old England falling on our ears. The old men and women, passing now so quickly that a neighbor told us he attended two funerals a week most all winter long, spoke a prose caught from the great rhythms of the King James Bible, an English with Elizabethan cadences, and swore with round old oaths, Zounds, Lord of Heaven, God Almighty, King David, By Jesus Christ and his Twelve Apostles. Your neighbor told you the flint corn Mason planted was "boughten" seed and that Sandwich Fair was "holden" the second Monday in October. The road agent says he will clean out the "cassey" by your pump house well. Ask him to spell the word and he will betray his education by tolling it out "c-a-u-s-e-w-a-y." The auctioneer wrenches himself out of his American slang and catches the accents of a Merry Andrew.

Intimations of Old England are everywhere. Our corner of New England, Sandwich in middle New Hampshire, has in very few places any semblance to typical countrysides of Old England, a glade of the New Forest with great oaks in the background, a high down with furze-cutters in Hardy's Dorset, a sheep pasture above the timberline on a mountain

of Wordsworth's Westmoreland. Our barn, though, is an English barn, with the threshing floor the long way of its seventy-two feet by forty feet. You buy Volume III of the tenth edition of Lord Byron's *Works*, London, John Murray, 1820, from the same bin of old books that yields you the *Poems* of Frances Turner Osgood published in Philadelphia by Carey and Hart in 1850. Your neighbor, Race Rogers, with his fiddle under his chin, looked like one of a party good and ready for a Christmas wassailing. In a Friendly home in Dover you find portraits of Joseph John Gurney and his better half, showing in what honor those distinguished English Quakers were held among us.

Why we were so slow to make China for our own use in America is difficult to explain. There were early attempts in Burlington, in New Jersey, and in Philadelphia, where Tucker china had a brief heyday a hundred years ago. Maybe it was because we could not meet the competition of the long established potteries of Staffordshire. At any rate it was a fact that after we had refinements in other household gear that made us discontented with wooden bowls and spoons and heavy redware, we imported both our common and fine china from England. Stoneware and queen's ware were found everywhere and they turn up at country auctions in New Hampshire even today.

At a recent auction I bought a deep and capacious soup tureen of Old World origin and I had hardly stowed it away under my chair before the auctioneer walked over to me with a mirror holder, brass with an insert of the most delicate Battersea porcelain. It had a crack in it, but you rarely come upon one without some imperfection, so thin and fragile are the little plates of it with their pictures of gallants or landscape. This one was a landscape, of a church and mill beyond a broad stream, on the nearer side of which

walks a wandering man with a staff over his shoulder and a little sack near the end of the staff.

The man's smock is red; the stream soft blue; the green-sward beyond the stream yellow green; the church tower that warm rose that Salisbury Cathedral takes on in the sunset glow. A green tree spreads umbrella-wise between church roof of old blue and mill roofs of old rose. There is a warm whiteness of sunlit skies in the background and a thin veil of blue at the uppermost of the scene. All is compressed into an inch and a quarter in diameter. Just as so often in objects of American interior decoration you discover items not one whit Uncle Samish, so this bit of Battersea is not one whit John Bullish. In England and in America delicacies that are inherited from who shall say what racial strain result in a Herrick or a Jane Austen, a Hawthorne or an Emily Dickinson.

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## “Dummit,” said Philip

[for WILLIAM HEARD]

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THE little lady was a mite nervous. The old gentleman was in reminiscent mood, and his thought turned to her ancestors up Bennett Street in the long ago. “That great grandfather of yours, Philip Atwood,” he said, “was a man with answers and a power to speak his mind. Grant’s old roan was not wholly well of horse ail when Aristus drove him up from Weed’s Mills past Atwood’s, taking the school-marm to her school there at the river crossing. When they reached the pasture where Atwood’s bay was feeding he came running towards them. As the bars were low he just took over them as easy as could be. The roan stopped and the two rubbed noses in friendly fashion. Old Philip, taking it all in from the barn door, said: ‘Dummit, Caractacus will now have the horse ail, too.’

“The next day Grant’s horse was so much better he came up at a good pace, all stretched out. Philip had the top rail in now at the bars. Atwood’s horse came over galloping, tail up and with lots to say, but he did not quite dare the jump. He ran along opposite the team, inside the fence as far as he could go, but he was distanced by the roan even in that short run. ‘Dummit,’ said Philip, ‘the one’s as much too slow as the other’s too fast.’

"It was when he was courting, though, as a young man, that Philip gave an answer to a girl that was never forgotten by any young man in our town who was putting the question. Philip called on Melissa Rugg, and asked her to marry him. 'I will not,' said Melissa, 'I can do better, I think.'

"'By jolly,' replied Philip, 'and so, I think, can I.'

"Philip did," said the old gentleman, looking at the little lady, "He wed your great grandmother."



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## Orchids

[L.M. MRS. BEAN *and* MRS. PEASLEE]

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EMERSON'S "Forbearance" is in my mind as I look at the bowl of orchids. Part of his adjuration I have observed, and named the birds without a gun. I have not, however, obeyed that other, "Loved the wood rose, and left it on its stalk." I would no more pick the last gentian of a dwindling stand of it than I would rob the nest of the last pair of bobolinks of a countryside, but I do not hesitate to take a bunch of fringed orchids when I find them growing by the hundreds in an unfrequented bog. I think I do no wrong in gathering two score of them annually. Certainly their numbers have diminished not at all in the twenty years I have taken toll of them here.

The purple orchids stand stiffly enough in the bowl, a brown-bread crock I suspect. It is eight inches high and it swells up bell shape from a bottom of six inches in diameter to a top of nine. Its glaze, of red brown clouded a little with green, is neutral enough to be unobtrusive below the many shades of purple in the orchid spikes, from purplish white to deepest Tyrian.

In such a bowl, on the little Hepplewhite stand, between the two windows of the white paneled room, they concentrate beauty as they do not in the bog. Despite what Emer-

son says, I can "bring home the river and the sky," a very small river it is true, a mere trickle of icy water too shallow even for trout. I have rejoiced again and again in the sight of the orchids growing amid the sparse swamp grass, sphagnum tufted and set with low hazels here and there. I can see again when I will the spruce and balsam trees that round in the bog's few acres. These acres hold their own better than most of the open land hereabouts against the encroaching forests. They have probably been savannah from time immemorial, though what was once the cleared acres of a farm lie just a few rods above them on the mountainside. I can see, in memory, the blue of the sky above the rim of the dark trees, the high piled white clouds, the bright yellow of the sunlight warming the tawny green of the bog grasses.

I often wonder when I am here if the folks who once lived close by and looked out from the higher acres of the farm cared for it any more than I do. It may be that they did, for it was home to them. It may be that they did not, but longed for escape from its loneliness. It was a many peopled land they looked out upon in old days, Bennett Street in the foreground, the rolling hills of Sandwich beyond, and the Belknaps, in far Gilmanton, beyond Winnetoesaukee, in the background. A little to the east of the middle distance they could see the clearings of the forty farms on the northern slopes of Black Snout in the Ossipees, slopes where there are now no farms.

Until this year, a pair of robins held on faithfully to the clearing the Taskers made here four generations ago. They and the Provence roses in many instances remain longer in the places man has made suitable for them than man himself remains. The roses can escape only through their descendants sprung from seeds bird-carried away. The robins can go when they will. They have not the restlessness of man, or, if they have, they satisfy it by their annual migrations to

places of winters less severe. I am sorry I no longer hear the robin song as I gather the orchids in the bog. Its suggestion of man's habitation here in old days deepened the sense of wildness so insistent here now. More than once I have seen bear tracks in the bog, once so fresh the water was still oozing from the sphagnum into the deep footprints pressed down into the black muck. Yet, with the association of pilgrimages to the place reaching through twenty years, I think its orchids have more beauty gathered and in the bowl in our old house than they ever had in the bog.

Here, too, in the bog, are pogonias, in their thousands. Their rather inconspicuous pinkiness is nearly lost in the tawny greenness of the swamp. You must have these little orchids close to the eyes to drink in the details of form and color that add so much to the charm their scent gives them. Their fragrance is a slight fragrance. It is so dispersed in the bog it is a sense of sweetness rather than a scent. In a rounded sugar bowl of Staffordshire brown-lined, or in a little Chinese ginger jar, or in a low beaker of brass, they give me more joy of scent and color and form than they did in the bog.

Certain it is that the greatest pleasure the pogonias bring you is through their scent. It is a distinctive scent. Thrashing out the question in family discussion we have come to an agreement that the pogonia scent has affiliations to that of cultivated violets and to that of ripe raspberries. Yet it is a scent apart from either of these or from a combination of these. The purple fringed orchid has a scent of more body, a little like the scent of lilacs from far away, a distinctive scent, too. The great spikes of the fringed orchids are congeries of half a hundred flowers, each daintily and distinctly outlined in its place on the spike. It is not to me, though, in any way a rival to the pogonia.

Inch long only, with a lower petal furred with deep pink,

and five petals and sepals above of a lighter pink, the pogonia nods gently on its stiff stem if any wind finds its way in to the low places of the bog it inhabits. Those who know only such orchids as *Zenobia* wore, or as the flower shows flaunt, will laugh, perhaps, at so modest-hued a flower as the pogonia being an orchid. "An orchid technically," I can hear such saying, "but not an orchid worthy of the name."

And yet, to me, the pogonia is one of the choicest of all wild flowers, a fellow almost to the rare fringed gentian or the common wild rose. The pogonia has not for me the associations of rose or gentian. I have not known it from childhood. I found it first in youth, and in some inscrutable way it brings back my youth to me. There is no conscious memory awakened by its scent, but only an intimated recapture of a season of life in which many things were untasted; only a feeling of unusualness, of choiceness, of rarity; only a suggestion of exotic sweetness in a setting cool and stern.

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## How Aaron Turned the Other Cheek

[for CHARLES PETER MAC GREGOR]

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THE potentate of Granite Corners was reputed to be a godless man. He had been born to little and his business ventures in youth had reduced that little to less. In debt, he resolved to quit town. He did, but he was seen decamping with all his worldly goods swung in a bandanna from a stick over his shoulder. His creditors put the sheriff on his track and he was overtaken and arrested at Portland as he was about to take boat for Boston. Taken back to the hill town of his birth, a storekeeper who had been a friend of his father paid off the two hundred dollars that he owed, and Aaron set out again to escape from Granite Corners. Before he left, however, he called down a curse on his creditors, saying that he would not come home again until he was rich enough to buy up the whole town and turn it into a sheepwalk.

Twenty-five years afterwards he returned a millionaire. One by one he employed nearly all the men of the town in turning the hill farm on which he was born into a manorial estate. He built a great house with columns in front and rear alike, a house with no back buildings, telling folks it was a Greek temple. It was called, of course, "Prescott's Tomb." He built a great dam with a dressed granite dam

breast, and with a "belvidere," as he called it, at the upper end. He had boats at a landing by the belvidere, and gave boating parties, having an orchestra up from Boston to play Haydn's "Water Music" to the scorn of all his old neighbors. What particularly outraged them was the canopied boats, with Negro oarsmen in uniform, to row them for his city guests.

He built terraced gardens on the hill his father had with difficulty scratched a living from, a hill of so poor soil it was known in the neighborhood as "poverty hill." He called it "Twickenham Gardens," having read his Pope in lonely evenings in the attic that had housed him in those early years of privation in Boston. He built a maze of arbor vitae trees, a formal garden eighteenth century style with sundial, summer house and parterres. He had a pleasaunce balustraded with white marble on which he and his guests bowled, and on which, when it was deserted of men, peacocks strutted.

By this time half of the town was in his employ or dependent on him in some way. One day, as a hundred men were nooning on his estate, he walked around from group to group and told them to go to the office and be paid off. They were discharged. This was in August, too late for them to plant anything on their places against the coming winter. He was trying to keep his promise to turn the farms of the town into a sheepwalk. He hoped to buy in cheap the places that had been little cultivated for five years, and send their owners west. It was the time of the first exodus, of the decade 1845-1855. He failed in this effort. Out of sheer perversity, as he thought, his neighbors refused to sell. It was the drift to the cities depopulated these farms a generation or two later, and turned the countryside, not into a sheepwalk, but into a preserve for deer, a deer park as well stocked as any in Old England, only with wilder creatures.

He succeeded, however, in his business enterprises, flourishing, said his disapproving neighbors, as the proverbial green bay tree. In his old age he was gouty and irascible, given to such bursts of rage with little provocation that he was generally avoided. This worried him not a bit, for he cared nothing for the attitude of his town toward him. He never craved public offices. It was enough for him that his townsmen envied him his ducats. When a meetinghouse in town burned down no one who knew him thought of going to him for a contribution towards its rebuilding. When a man recently come to town suggested asking the old curmudgeon he was laughed at. Nevertheless he went. He called, and a dapper maid answered his ring. He asked could he see Mr. Potentate. The maid said she would inquire. He was ushered in. The old man was in an easy chair in his library, lined floor to ceiling with shelving full of books, his gouty foot on a stool. The daring caller made known his errand. The old man asked if he had not been warned not to come. The caller said he had been but he did not believe what the people told him.

"You were right, and the people were wrong. The people are always wrong. I'll give you a thousand dollars and give it to you right now." The check was forthcoming immediately. The newcomer hastened away, wondering if payment on the check would not be stopped before he could deposit it. It was not stopped. The meetinghouse was rebuilt. When its dedication was to be celebrated just a year after the close of the Civil War, Mr. Potentate was asked to be present. He surprised everybody by coming in a Victoria drawn by four horses. He hobbled in on his ivory headed cane and was given a seat in the third row of pews. He would not take a front seat.

Said the minister in his peroration: "There are townsmen who have given generously, even though not members

of this church. There are townsmen who have not given at all, even though members of this church. He who has made the largest contribution is with us. I call on Mr. Potentate to rise, and then, when he has sat down again we shall all rise in honor of his princely gift." Mr. Potentate struggled to his feet with difficulty. His rising was received in silence for there could, of course, be no applause in meeting. He supported himself by one hand on the back of the pew before him and waved his cane in the air with his other hand. The cane came down, and was poked into the back of another oldster, a very old and hale veteran fifteen years beyond Mr. Potentate's three score and ten.

"That's the man Mr. Minister referred to," said Mr. Potentate, prodding the octogenarian affectionately in the small ribs. "You're the man that gave nothing to the rebuilding fund though a member of the church. You're the man the minister referred to."

Chuckling, Mr. Potentate settled down slowly into his seat. The man shamed before the whole congregation was he who had caused the potentate to be arrested fifty years before when he was leaving town to seek his fortune, but with certain bills unpaid. Mr. Potentate had gotten his money's worth for his contribution.

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## Northern-Hearted

[for ALLIE H. WELCH]

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THERE are reminders in plenty of the poets as I look out of my window in Sandwich. To the southeast is Mt. Whittier named for the poet of *Snowbound* who summered so many years in the Bearcamp Valley. West of Mt. Whittier is Mt. Larcom, which takes its name for Mistress Lucy, who was on vacation roundabout season after season. To the southwest is Red Hill, where Thoreau rested overnight on a walking trip that took him to Tamworth and on to the Presidential Range. Due south, round the flanks of Mt. Shaw, was that school house on the high pastures under the Ossipees in which Robert Frost harbored for a summer in his youth. He could not find the place when he revisited it in 1934, forty odd years later. All those once open acres were now grown up to trees forty feet tall. Eastward of us, by Chocorua Lake, Frank Bolles lived what days off he could spare. His *Land of the Lingering Snow* and *To the North of Bearcamp Water* first worthily revealed our countryside through the medium of the personal essay.

On clear days of low and leaden clouds and that curious perspicuity that comes on the edge of winter, Emerson's Monadnoc is discernible in the southwest. The "prophet of the soul" was of various minds as to New Hampshire. He

alternately calls down blessings on "the uplands of New Hampshire," and condemns it as "the lofty land with little men." There is more of our immediate neighborhood in *Among the Hills* than in any other verse that the Bearcamp Valley and its environing mountains inspired. In its first publication, in *The Atlantic Monthly* for January, 1868, Whittier called the poem "The Wife: an Idyl of Bearcamp Water." He speaks of our people:

Saving, as shrewd economists, their souls  
And winter pork with the least possible outlay  
Of salt and sanctity.

The Quaker poet should know our Quaker Neighborhood.  
We are certain, at any rate, that:

There's iron in our Northern winds;  
Our pines are trees of healing.

Day by day we have seen our mountain rim as he saw it:

Clear drawn against the hard blue sky,  
The peaks had winter's keenness.

Northern-hearted are all these poets, Emerson, Thoreau, Whittier and Frost, with Frost the most Novembry of them all. Though Frost has come to write, in his later years, of spring, and fruiting autumn, and even of summer, a landscape with leafless woods is still the characteristic background of his poems. "The love of bare November days" is plangent in them. It inspires not only "My November Days," but "A Late Walk," "Going for Water," "Christmas Trees," "In the Homestretch," "The Runaway," "Good-Bye and Keep Cold," "Gathering Leaves," and "A Leaf Treader."

His "headless aftermath" is my November rowen. I, too, have known those "whirls of snow not come to lie." I, too,

have felt "something lonesome go through you" at the prospect of winter settling down over the countryside where "souls . . . grow fewer and fewer every year." I, too, have seen a runaway colt on the verge of winter. I, too, have hoped a little orchard would not blow too early in May and be caught by late frosts. I have regretted that I could not be in Sandwich in late November to bed down our roses and columbines and foxgloves with the leaves of the maples that are our dooryard trees.

Frost, almost alone among the New England poets of first rank, has been a year round resident of New Hampshire. Emerson and Whittier were but summerers in the hills, winter lovers though they both were. Emily Dickinson was a devotee of summer. She was glad "The summers of Hesperides were long." Only now and then did she have a lift of the heart:

A little this side of the snow  
And that side of the haze.

From his home above Franconia Village Frost watched the black shoulder of Lafayette whiten with the first snow. In the interval below his house he has seen hay of the second crop bitten by ice storms and bleach out on the edge of winter. He has known that tightening in that all life undergoes by November's end. He has delighted in the "dark days of November rain" that sweeps in from the northeast. Northern-hearted, he has faced winter cheerily where winter can do its worst.

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## Lament for the Loafer Rake

[for RYVERS AINGER]

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PHILANDER EATON needed some new teeth for his loafer rake. He went down to the rake factory at South Tamworth to get them. He could not get them. They had discontinued making them. For a hundred years what we knew in our early years in Sandwich as the Bartlett Rake Factory had made all sorts of wooden rakes. After the business was taken over by the South Tamworth Industries loafer rakes were still among the products of the factory. It was never for a moment anticipated in the neighborhood that they would be dropped from the list of articles made. So it was that the news fell on Philander as something hard to believe. By the time he ran across me, the day after the blow struck, his discomfiture had become vocal.

"It isn't," he said, "that I can't get a piece of seasoned oak and work teeth out with a shingling hatchet and a draw shave. I can. But that a something I've been used to all my life is made no more in our neighborhood! It is the end of something. It is just like the death of one of the old fellows. It is something oughtn't to happen. It is in the nature of things that loafer rakes ought to be made round here. The furniture factory at Merrill's Mills is gone. The hame factory is gone. The grist mill at Durgin's Bridge is gone. The

peg mill at the Corners is gone. Arthur Corliss is gone and the making of baskets with him. The cutting of ice on the ponds is almost gone, with everybody having to have ice-making refrigerators."

The reiteration of "gone, gone, gone," reminded me of the Greek threnodies and their laments for Adonis: "Adonis is dead and the loves are lamenting." The feeling of Philander, though, was wholly genuine, there was nothing merely ritual, merely conventional, about it. The passing of the loafer rake was threatened, and he had pulled a loafer rake all his days, he had sweated at the job, he was wonted to it. If the loafer rake went, part of Philander himself was gone, dead and gone. Its passing symbolized, to him, the changing of our middle New Hampshire from farmland back to lumber woods, from a locality of many little industries to but one large industry, the building over of old houses, the building of new houses, for folks on vacation or folks retired, and the taking care of them, of summers, and of winters, too, now that skiing had become popular.

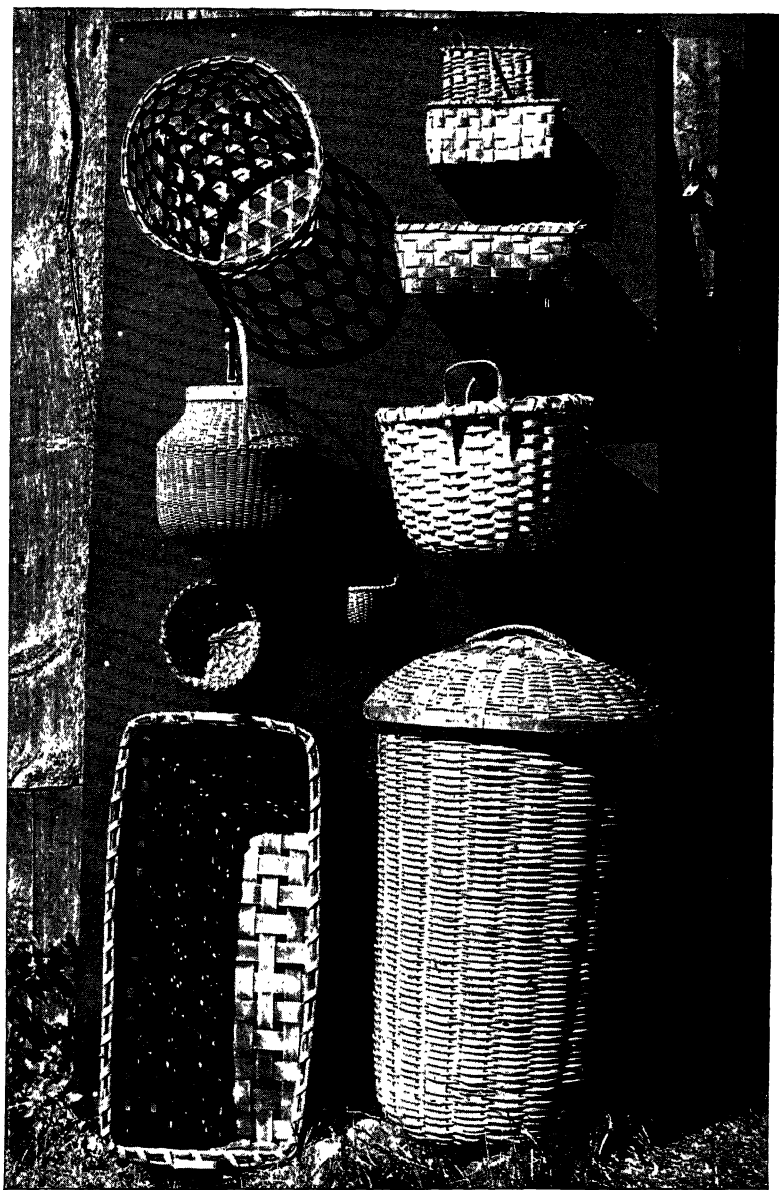
There may have even been echoes of the Greek threnodies in Philander's words. Our speech hereabouts comes to us from old English stock, from the King James version of the Bible, from the good talk of ministers and doctors and lawyers of old time who were brought up on the classics. Things Greek are not far alien to a countryside where yesterday Leander and Cyrus were common names, Leonidas and Hercules not uncommon ones, and Darius and Philemon not rare enough to be unpronounceable. Either doctor or minister, we are told, might have been responsible for the Greek names. They supplied them when, in long families, the family names had run short, the Biblical names came to be regarded as old-fashioned and the names of those great men, the founding fathers, too generally distributed among

the Toms, Dicks and Harries of the neighborhood to be chosen for one's own children. There were other men, too, than those in the professions, who had found their way from White Mountain farms to Phillips-Exeter, or Tilton, or New Hampton, and from those academies to Harvard or Bowdoin, Dartmouth or Brown.

It was, of course, the characteristic irony of the New Englander that led him to call this heaviest of all handrakes and the hardest to handle the "loafer rake." I do not hold with those who believe it was called a loafer rake because work with it was so hard you just had to loaf on the job. In the old days before horse rakes, when oxen and men harvested all the hay, the loafer rake was the means by which it was gathered into windrows before it was cocked. On good hay days of drying sun and wind the hay was loaded directly from the windrows without cocking. It was hard work, indeed, gathering up grass, dried and lightened though it was in the process of becoming hay, and pulling it into windrows. Loafer rakes are of different sizes, but the common size is about six feet long with sixteen teeth each about a foot long. It is a man's chore to drag it when used to gather up a good stand of hay. Nowadays the loafer rake is used on most farms only to gather up the drail after the horse rake has piled up the windrows.

Other names for this rake than "loafer" testify to the way in which it is used, or to its difficulty of manipulation or strength or coarseness. It is a "drag rake." It is a "man-killer." It is a "bull rake." "Bull" here means big, or strong, or coarse, as the "bull" or "bul" in bull briar, bulfinch, bullhead, bull pine or bulrush. The orthodox color for the "loafer rake" to be painted is that oxcart blue one finds on so many vehicles from wheelbarrow to hayrack.

"There are many things I can't make out," went on Philander. "Cream is high, butter is high, beef is very high.



BASKETS OF BROWN ASH





Hay, though, without which you can't have cream or butter or beef, is worthless. Nobody will cut your grass for you, what little is left here to cut, even if you give it to them standing, and they could store it in your barn. I suppose they cut three hundred tons on the five places here on the hill up to fifty years ago, that surely a hundred years ago. What do they cut now? Not more than thirty, I guess, and most of that on the place next above and on your place. I don't suppose a fiftieth of the hay is cut here in town as was when Sandwich was at its best. Those old folks had none of the conveniences either, no tractors and tedders, only oxen and men.

"I sometimes wonder if the trouble isn't that the machines we have now don't eat anything we could raise on the place, any hay or corn fodder or oats, as the horses and cattle did back along. We didn't have to buy the gasoline and oil that we have to have for the machines. And those machines don't give you any manure to keep up the richness of the land for raising stuff as the cattle and horses did.

"There is a great deal of talk of people having to go back to the land to raise food by which to live, but we don't see much of that coming our way here. There are fewer acres in grass and fewer acres in potatoes and in garden stuff each year. You remember Charles Fellows, what he used to say about wishing he had a great moving machine that would take down pine and poplar and rock maple just like a McCormick would herd grass and redtop and whitetop. I thought of that wish of his when the hurricane came through here in thirty-eight. That helped some. There's more sunlight reaching in to the ground than there has been for fifty years, but all the blow did was to make places for other kinds of timber than what was to come up. It wasn't making clearings for grass and apple orchards and truck patches, for grain fields and pastures and egg farms, for

any of the things there seems to be any money in for the farmer.

"No, the hurricane didn't do anything for the loafer rake. It rather worked against it, turning into lumbermen as it did, what few farmers were left. It's a poor outlook for farming in a country when you can't buy teeth there for a loafer rake."

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## The Clock Without a Face

[for LEROY WHITE]

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THERE is nothing so interesting to your true Yankee as a gadget of some kind. So it was that Leroy White told me of the clock in Phillipston as an attraction I should not miss. It was one of the wonders of his native heath, the country of low hills between Athol and Gardner in northern Massachusetts. He knew its maker, master mechanic and mathematician; he had heard its making as a boy playing about the chair factory in Golding where it was made; he had pumped the old organ in the church in which it was installed.

It came into being in an odd way. Its maker was forgiven a mortgage for building it. He who held the mortgage, knowing of a neighbor's building of a clock with three faces in the chair factory at Golding, said "If you make a clock for the Congregational Church at Phillipston I'll burn the mortgage I hold on your place." The handy man had hoped funds might be forthcoming to make the church clock a four faced one. They were not and the question of displacing the bell that swung in the belfry of the steeple further complicated the situation. So despite its maker's intentions the clock remained only a device for striking and not a device

for telling the time to all who approached its hilltop eyrie from all directions.

As you climb up through the choir loft where the old organ, maddered red, still rests, and climb up the stairs in the steeple, you pass the pendulum of the great mechanism, a huge stone, pear shaped, and come on the wheels of its wooden works. It was out of kelter when we visited it in August of 1939, but we could follow its ropes as they extended along the attic above the church ceiling and ran over pulleys at the far or pulpit end of the church. The great weights ran down in a shaft back of the pulpit.

It is hard work keeping the church going in these times when, as she who lives next door said, young people are no longer vitally interested in church. She spoke thus with no resentment but with just a quiet acceptance of what this day and generation had brought about. They had difficulty in getting together the money for the minister's modest salary, and more than twenty-five people for the church meetings. The Sunday School was larger, children being still interested in Sunday School.

As I had climbed out on the copper floor of the belfry and looked about all quarters of the horizon it was Monadnock my eyes always returned to. Monadnock to me is always Emerson's Monadnock whether I see it from Leonard Wood's Winchester, or Denman Thompson's Swanzey, or Edward MacDowell's Peterborough. Monadnock dominates miles on miles of northern Massachusetts and miles on miles of southern New Hampshire. I have run about it on all sides, north, south, east and west. I have, however, never spent more than a night hereabout, so I cannot say whether, as in Emerson's day, there still survives here in this abandoned farm country and abandoned factory country around Phillipston what Emerson found, "unvalued, un-

derfoot" that "hardy English root," masters of our "ancient speech," "Rude poets of the tavern hearth."

A hundred miles to the northward it does, or did until yesterday. Only today Leander visiting with me, said: "It was lucky you came here when you did. Then the old men were still alive. There are none like them today. Those old fellows were the cream of life. The ones we have now are by comparison poorer than skim milk." I told him about the clock at Phillipston. "Yes, the younger men about here are like that, now it don't strike. The younger men are clocks without faces and without a strike."

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## The Excrescence

[for DR. BROWN of WAKEFIELD]

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THE old gentleman was working in his flower garden behind the arbor vitae hedge. It screened him wholly from the automobile highway that carried cars in their hundreds under the great elms and past the white houses of as lovely a village as New Hampshire can boast. It was the old gentleman's ancestral home, built by his mother's grandfather and inherited from her by the old gentleman. He had gone out in the world to a great city far away and acquired a competency. The house of his ancestors was now, after his retirement from business, his summer home.

As he worked the weeds out from among his belladonna larkspurs, he heard two women talking about his house as they dawdled by in their car. "That excrescence spoils it," said one in authoritative tones. The old gentleman stepped out of his gateway and held up his hand. "Stop!" he said, in tones equally authoritative to those of the lady. "I know it. That excrescence does spoil my house, but there is a reason for it. It is there because my mother was greatly troubled because they could not get her father's coffin out of the front door as it had been constructed when the house was built in 1790. A large man, his coffin could not be turned so as it would go out of the front door, so close to it was

the newell post at the foot of the stairway. The bearers had to carry him out through the side door, an indignity she felt that would make him turn in his grave. That side door was the one they used for all usual ingress and egress, the front door being used only at funerals and on the going to church of the whole family in pomp and ceremony and decorous black of Sabbath mornings. She determined that the front door would be so widened it would admit of the passage of the largest coffin. She was entirely altruistic in this, for she herself was a tiny creature whose coffin could surely be carried out of the door as it was.

"In widening the door the carpenter made as much of a job of it as he could, carrying the vestibule-like protuberance—I beg pardon, excrescence—he persuaded them to break out, up beyond the second story to the level of the roof. All that was simon-pure eighteen seventy and entirely out of keeping with the rest of the house. However as it is, I let it stand. My mother was carried out of that door. I, too, shall be. Good morning and a safe journey."

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## No Berries but Blackberries

[I.M. ALVA W. BATCHELDER]

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THERE be no berries but blackberries," said Alvie, "to my way of thinking." Then he paused, bemused with wonder that Lydia Elizabeth, his wife of nearly fifty years, should be one he could not convince of the rightness of his belief. "She likes blueberries better because they keep better canned, but there is not much taste to them. Strawberries have the taste, but Job himself wouldn't have the patience to brim a noggin with them. Raspberries be tasty, too, and they have a way of giving you a fall crop on the canes of the year, but they beant blackberries. Black and comely the blackberries be, like that woman in 'The Song of Solomon.' And Solomon, I calliate, could he have known the berrying grounds on Young Mountain and Guinea Hill, would have no cause to envy the little foxes their tender grapes had he once his fill of the blackberries grow there."

Such talk by Alvie was much on my mind when we arrived in Sandwich in mid-June. The patch across the road that has grown up in recent years between the site of the old garden and the fence to the south pasture was in full bloom then. I had never seen it so white with flowers, all the high stand of its canes close crowded together in lustihead and unaffected, apparently, by the ice and killing sun of the winter of 1936-



37. For three years we had had no berries to speak of from these briars, or from others along the walls of the south hayfields, drought after drought drying out the green carpels before they could fill and ripen. Fully two weeks later when this bloom was passing, the dewberries in the hayfield west of the barn were beginning to show their white blossoms. Lifting them on tendrils from their lowly stations, they made a brave show, their many flowers asserting themselves despite the grass and sorrel and polypod among which they grew. If you extricate these white starred vines carefully from their background of greenery and curl them around in an old milk pan of redware you have a bouquet to rival that white clematis that will be in blow a month later.

We have done no blackberrying off our own acres. We have gone to the ledges on Whiteface and to the sandy wastes of Ossipee for blueberries. We have taken red raspberries in plenty from this place and that where they were growing in slash, but what spoil of blackberries we have had, as of wild strawberries, we have found within a quarter of a mile of our house. It is children, for the most part, that gather strawberries. Grownups will go raspberrying, as we do what years they are abundant, and an expedition after blueberries is indulged in by most families at least once a summer. Of these various berryings, however, only that for blueberries is approximately on a par with blackberrying. Not every farm is as apt to have blueberries as blackberries. There is often a patch of blackberries along the road not a stone's throw from the house. There a whole family may turn out on a Sunday afternoon in August to gather what fruit they can for pie, or mush, or preserving, or, most often, to top off a meal in a bowl with sugar and milk. The three helps that delight a child's heart are possible under these circumstances.

There were adventures more than a few on such black-berrying parties in those beary summers of 1935 and 1936. Drought having prevented blueberry crops on the mountain ledges both years, the poor creatures were forced down to what farmland remains in town. One man alone bagged twelve of the creatures in our neighborhood, one on the very hill on which we live, in the early fall of 1936. In August of that year a family were out in full force picking blackberries just by their home, grandam, daughter and son-in-law and four grandchildren. As they closed in all about the patch, a big black bear heaved himself up on his hind feet to get a look at his disturbers, and, dropping again to his feet, lunged straight at grandam. She insisted his snout caught her under the knees as he charged. However that may be, she went down as precipitately as a child does, when, another child falling to all fours unseen behind him, a third youngster gives him a sudden push. Whatever happened as to grandam and the bear grandam needed the doctor to pull her knee back into place. The old fellow had probably been snoozing in the centre of the patch after gorging himself with the fruit.

What years we have had good yields on our place we have had delectable desserts of the blackberries. A coreless variety, they are delicious with the clotted cream we have from Herbert Perkins. No Devonshire cream and strawberries in Old England is more paradisal than this offering of northern New England. There is no pie to rival blackberry pie, and blackberry mush, if you strain out the seeds and serve with the cream aforesaid, is a dish for the daintiest palate. It is in jam, though, that we have the greatest joy of our blackberries. Carried South to Pennsylvania in glass tumblers it is brought out only on occasions, to the acclaim of all who share it. To us of the family this blackberry jam seems to quintessentialize the richness of late

summer in Sandwich, to bring back to us the warm noons and cool nights of departing August. There is to it a ripeness, a completeness of satisfaction, an utter fulfillment of the promise of its scent that belong to few sweets. There is uniqueness of flavor to it, too, with no near companions that might be confused with it, and it is a flavor that holds, that lasts, that lessens slowly even after years. Blackberry jam, or blackberry jelly, labelled 1929 is as good as blackberry jelly or blackberry jam made in this year of grace 1937, when by chance an overlooked tumbler of that old vintage is discovered at the back of the top shelf of the cupboard.

Toward August's end, when Alvie fell nervous, we used to guess it was because of blackberries. When he was a boy up Bennett Street he picked blackberries on the mountain pastures on Young and Guinea Hill. His memories of those days were the best of his present, now Lyd Liz was gone and he was well past the allotted span for man. He could not recapture the joys were his from ten to twenty, but no greater joy was left him than visiting the places associated with those joys. "The feel of blackberries plump and dewy," he would say, "the stain of them on my fingers, the taste of them on my lips, the smell of them as mother cooked them—what could be better?"

As his restlessness grew on him Alvie would look up Charles, who was older by only a year, and persuade him to go blackberrying with him on the slopes that once fed a hundred cattle. Charles would excuse himself for humoring Alvie by saying: "I can have a look at those creatures of mine, salt 'em, and judge what weight they have put on. We can go up by Weed's Mills, and then over across." It was not often they found such pecks of blackberries as Alvie recalled picking in old days, but they generally came home with enough spoil to pay Charles for his trouble. Alvie had, of course, his half of what the two of them picked. What

was better, though he would not own it, was a renewal of boyish memories. The two old men passed by, on one of these expeditions, a cellar hole where once had been a house whose occupants had afforded Alvie some fun. After a deep and quieting snow Alvie and another boy had rolled a great snowball up the long and gently sloping roof of the house, and dumped it down the chimney, to the consternation of the family sitting around the open fireplace, and with no unpleasant consequences to themselves, for no one suspected the two of them of the trick.

Alvie and Charles gave up these expeditions after they were eighty. At eighty-nine Charles drove his Ford thrice into our dooryard in the summer of 1937. Alvie had died in the January of that year, a good death after less than a week's illness. I am afraid the Quaker graveyard where he is buried is cared for too well for the all invading "half shrubby plant" he so loved to bloom and fruit by the tombstone of red granite he had set up there, after Lyd Liz died, for her, and for him. Should they not rid up those two graves it is quite possible that the legend recorded in the tag so frequent in old ballads should occur in reality. There are blush roses and briars in the graveyard. A rose might well establish itself on the grave of Lydia Elizabeth and a briar on the grave of Alvah Webster.

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## The Wind About the Eaves

[for W. R. MC KENZIE]

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IT is perhaps a question of age, one's reaction to the sound of the wind about the eaves. It is perhaps a question of the place in which one listens to it. As a youth I liked nothing better, in far away Pennsylvania, than to lie snug in bed of winter nights and to listen to the wail of the wind. It was never that way with me listening to the waves coming up the beach. That was never to me a lulling sound. I felt the hopelessness of escaping from it. Nothing could stop it. It was a sound reiterant to the crack of doom. The wail of the wind was fitful. Now it cried about the house, and now it ceased to cry. Only at long intervals was there a wind that moaned about the house day after day.

Now, however, in old age and in a lonely countryside of steadily lessening population, I am less partial to the crying of wind. My mind reverts to lines of Yeats, "There is much evil in the crying of wind" and "Man, a hater of the wind." For one thing, it is often hard to keep the house warm when the wind is high. So it has been for the next to last week in September of nineteen thirty-seven. Day after day we have just escaped black frost. Day after day the thermometer has been from thirty-three to forty in the morning. If we wintered here we, of course, would have a furnace in the

cellar and stoves in certain rooms in lieu of the open fireplaces we have now to rely on in the main part of the house. The kitchen alone, with its great wood burning stove, is heated as our American ideal of comfort demands.

It was at night in old years, in Germantown, I liked to lie abed and to listen to the wind. It is at night here in Sandwich the wind seems most in keeping with things as they should be. You can be comfortable in bed no matter how cold the weather. You cannot be comfortable in all the rooms of the house without more clothes on than are compatible with the heavy work of getting the place shut up for the winter.

There is no day or no night here, even in the summer, a wind may not spring up and wail about the house at any hour. Snow lies on the northern face of Mt. Washington through June and in Tuckerman's Ravine even later. One seeks the shade at nooning few days even in July and August. The water in the brooks is cold. The skies grow lowery and scatter icy scud on the warmest midsummer days. Thunderstorms bring hail. The cool breezes we delight in turn sharper than cool before sunset. Winter is in the wind that prowls about the house after nightfall. The fireflies and crickets that are lively in the dark may dim their glinting and cease their crying any moment.

What is hard to bear is the ceaseless wuther of the wind about the house from dawn to day's end. I have been wakened by it at daybreak, with the horn of Chocorua old rose under the first flush of the rising sun. It will persist while all the Ossipees glow bright amber, not the amber of glass but the amber of ambergris. It seems strange, untoward, for the wind to be loud with all this radiance over our mountain world. Some days, and they are the most difficult to endure, it sounds but the one note all day, the moan that has been in man's ears all the aeons man has been. Again it will rise

from a moan to a wail, or thin out into little shivering nuances of sound, or heighten to shrill fiffing, or fall to a slither about the eaves as gentle as rain on the shingles.

Out of doors you can face any amount of wind cheerfully, enjoy its buffetings, feel stimulated by the rain it drives into your face. Out of doors the mellow air of early fall just pleasantly astir laves you as cleansingly as lake water. This same mellow breeze may have a moan in it if you listen to it from indoors. If the wind bothers you reading by the fire, out and face it, if the season will allow. It is only when you are passive, relaxed, inactive, that the wind sounds lonesome. It is the wind about the eaves makes man a hater of the wind. Out of doors, and blown upon by it, overcoming its shove and push, you care not at all what way it comes. Northwester, northeaster, dead norther, are all alike stimulant, and as welcome as the southwester, fabled from of old as the bringer of all good things.

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## “It’s Good for What Ails Ye”

[for JOHN W. BRYANT]

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THERE are memories surviving in Sandwich of the old herb doctors. When the oldsters talk of Dr. This or Dr. That you cannot be sure whether the reference is to a man trained in the office of a physician and by medical lectures, the graduate of a formally organized medical school, or whether he was an Indian doctor or one who was instructed in the uses of wild herbs by the tradition of his neighborhood. A neighbor noticed catnip on the wharfing of our barn and asked if he might take of it for a brew for a croupy baby. The old grandmother in his house advised it. Another neighbor told how snakeroot steeped in whiskey was given him for every ail he had. Another told us of the many herbs that were here gathered and taken down country and sold to the Shakers of Canterbury who then manufactured them into patent medicines, among them Dr. Corbett’s famous cherry pectoral. Nearly every attic down to Civil War times had dried herbs hung across from one set of rafters to another. As late as the summer of 1937 I came on such bags suspended in the attic of the deserted tavern of old Colonel Cotton of Cotton Valley in East Wolfeboro. Even the lumbermen who bunked here a while had refrained from laying a ruthless hand on these sur-



vivors from old times. They had, perhaps, something of the reverence folks display for an abandoned church. After all, religion and medicine were closely akin in the dawn of civilization and seem nearing again towards its close.

The great house of the Averys at Wolfeboro was no exception to the rule in its preservation of herbs, though here, apparently, the bags of paper holding the various herbs had at some time or other been taken down from the rafters and packed into a two foot high piece of cooperage with a cover. This cover was branded "S.A.," and the same initials appeared on the bottom of the container, whose staves and hoops were alike wood, most delicately shaved and fitted together. It was probably the work of Samuel Avery, who here built a story-and-a-half house on the lakeside in 1812.

There was a heavy paper folded around some herbs labelled "spearmint" in a bold hand, in three places, but an inner bag labelled "tansy" was now the contents. The spearmint had been used, one would guess. It is a herb hard to come by in this north country, winter killing for us on our every attempt to establish it. Horsemint flourishes here. It grew up among the Provence roses by the front door of our house, and around the tall bush cranberry at the back door. In protected situations neighbors have coaxed spearmint to survive the winters and give a relish to lamb and juleps.

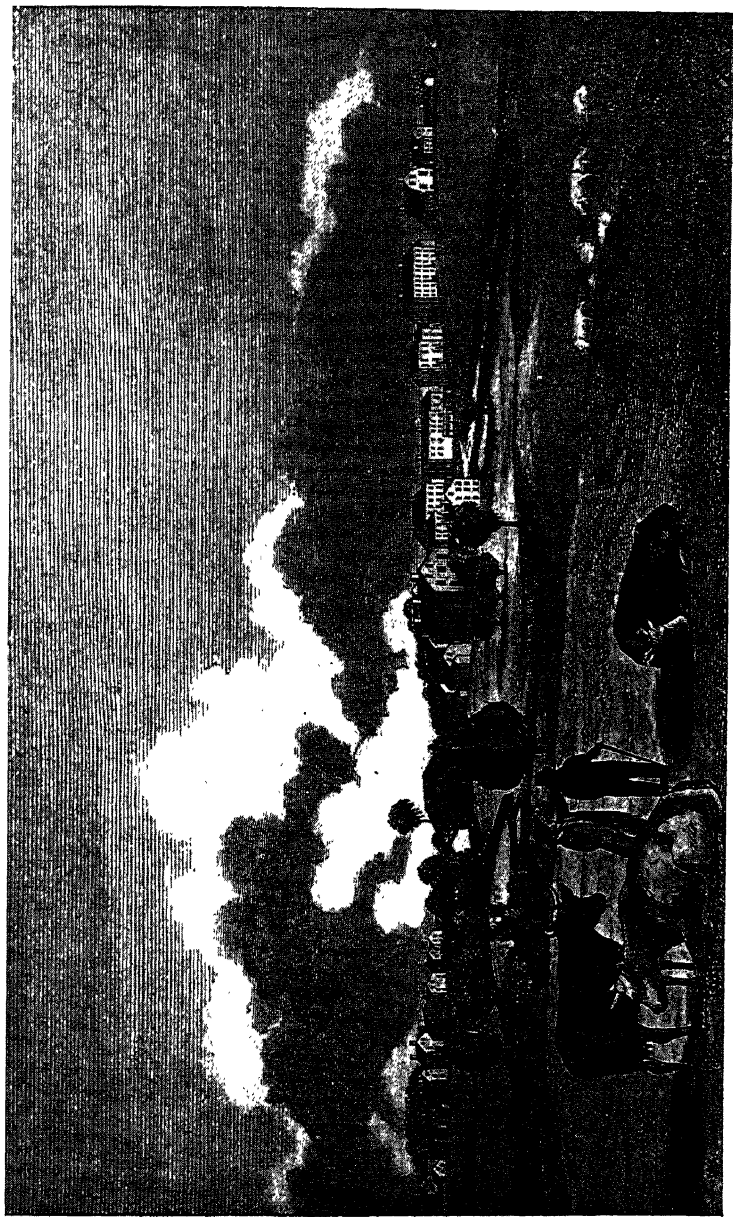
Herbs unlabelled and unidentifiable by me are wrapped up in a Boston *True Flag* of August 21, 1858, seventy-nine years to the day, on which I am writing about the herbs. In that old newspaper there are verses by Thomas Bailey Aldrich on "The Blue-Bells of New England," but whether he refers to the wild bluebells such as used to toss, acres blue with them, opposite the Willey House towards Crawfords, or to the cultivated campanulas that are escapes to the roadsides here and there, I cannot make out. Unlabelled, too, are dried flowers obviously Sweet William. My old

botany book, Alphonso Wood's of 1853, tells me in its table on "The Language of Flowers" that Sweet William symbolizes a smiling villain, and quotes Gerard's *Herbal* as valuing it "for its beauty to deck up the bosoms of the beautiful, and garlands and crowns for pleasure." Neither Alphonso, though, or Old Noah in his dictionary, tells us what is its use medicinally.

There are two bags of thoroughwort in the cooperage, one dated 1878, the other undated. It was a bitter, ill tasted herb that was supposed to be a tonic. It is held of account even today. I ran across a housewife drying its flowers over in East Conway only the other afternoon. There must be virtue, it is held, in what is so ill tasting and hard to swallow. It was, indeed, the standby of the old herb doctors who, when they could not diagnose what was the matter with a patient, would give the unfortunate thoroughwort, saying to the victim, impressively and cryptically: "It's good for what ails ye."

There was catnip in the Avery barrel, in a bag made out of *The Granite State News* of 1865, a herb our present line of cats, from mother to son, will pay no attention to whatsoever. The sage is dated 1889. Sage tea, like thoroughwort, was held helpful in many ills. It was a quieting, restful concoction. One wonders what Cordelia Cooke, of Corinth, Vermont, who owned my copy of Mr. Wood's *Class Book of Botany*, thought of her mentor's aphorism about sage: "There is nothing lovelier in woman than the domestic virtues." Is that what a young woman would welcome in a list that was headed "the language of flowers?"

There are dried bunches of wild carrot and of chamomile in the Avery collection, chamomile, which Mr. Wood tells us symbolizes fortitude, and is a tonic and anodyne, or soother of pain. It was the bag labelled hyssop that most delighted me. It had place, hyssop, in a passage of the



THE SHAKER VILLAGE AT CANTERBURY



“Psalms” I treasured as I treasured “cedars of Lebanon” and “still waters,” “dark sayings,” “east of Eden,” “there is no new thing under the sun,” “an handful with quietness,” “spikenard and saffron,” “fishpools in Hebron.” These phrases and scores of their fellows had carried me through dull hours in church that without them had been all but unendurable.

The word “hyssop” is not in itself lovely, or even picturesque. It is far short of wonder waking. It is not so musical as the names of many herbs, balm or sweet basil, coriander or cummin, fennel or lavender, rosemary or rue, sweet marjoram or southernwood. Yet somehow hyssop beguiled me. It seemed aromatic, soothing, sweet of the sun. There was healing in it for me, content, wings away. It was its sound and not its association with rites of purification that won me. It conjured up the bittersweet scent of beehives. “Honey” was antiphonal to “hyssop” in my inner ear. But always in the end there rose there the chant of “Psalm 51: 7”: “Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.”

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## Of Coral Snakes, Canary Lustre and Shrews

[for JESSE CURRIER]

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THE adventures of the coral snake began at the raspberry bushes. As he twisted his way rapidly from their shelter the three pullets were after him as one bird. They overtook him in the scant and sun scorched grass of the driveway up the barn wharfing. With his nine inches and brown back he seemed only a large worm to the pullets, and eminently fit for food. At the first peck the white pullet gave him, however, he reacted a little differently from an earthworm under similar circumstances. The coral snake tied himself up like a pretzel, with red belly up in certain convolutions and brown back up in others, and, raising his head, darted out his threadlike tongue at his persecutors. The dominique pullet and the red dorking sidled up to the rebuffed white one and all three gave those subdued gurgles with which all the fowl kind greet the sight of something untoward, whether snake or sable, hare or tortoise, mole or marsh hawk.

I picked up the coral snake and took him into the house to keep to show the family when they returned from the Centre. I went to the corner cupboard to find something to put him in. He was so little he would only half fill the tiny cup of canary lustre. It was only an inch and three-quarters

in diameter and an inch and three-quarters in height. The red brown of its decoration, two lambs lying before a whin-bush of conventionalized sort, was not far from the color of the snake's sides, less bright than his belly, more bright than his back. He looked decorative there in the cup, his brown warm against the canary yellow of its inside.

Obviously he would escape from the cup so I put him into the half-pint railroad bottle of amber green glass, the one with the horse and car on tracks and "Lowell" below on the one side, and the eagle and thirteen stars on the reverse. Here he reposed quietly until he was put on exhibition. Dumped out and caught by the neck, he flattened himself to the thinness that would have enabled him to work his way between a crack an eighth of an inch wide. Taken out of doors and released on the lawn he refused to budge, but lay rigid on the grass with his back raised in ridges that showed his minute scales. Finally he condescended to take himself off. Never had he descended to any unseemly struggles. As soon as he found, by a wriggle or two, and the flattening, that he could not escape, he lapsed into dignified rigidity and kept that pose until we ceased tickling him with a stem of timothy. Then, left to his own devices, he slid off calmly and crept in between the stones of the underpinning to the porch.

It is under some flat stone, not too firmly imbedded in the earth, that you will find the coral snake, or under a board that has been left in the orchard grass, or under some log rotting away in a fencerow. Or you may meet him travelling as the pullets did this fellow of the barn wharfing. Nearly all I have come upon have been about the one length, nine inches to ten, and all, like this one last met, have had dignified and gentle ways, and, apparently, much less fear of man than grass snake, or garter snake, or milk snake. There is none of the repulsion about the coral snake that all of us

feel, in some measure or other, toward the larger snakes. There is no slime or offensive odor about him, and he is so slim his coldness affects you no more than does the coldness of a newt.

You feel toward the coral snake, in relation to a large snake, just about as you feel toward the least shrew in relation to the brown rat. The coral snake is commoner than the shrew. Or perhaps it would be more exact to say that the shrew is seen less often than the coral snake. There may be many more of both creatures than you judge there are from the few you come upon even in a life spent largely out-of-doors. I have myself never seen a live shrew, and I have picked up only three dead ones. I missed one very lively little live shrew in the flurry we always get into when the dog locates a woodchuck in a wall. In my absence to fetch water and a crowbar to dislodge the chuck from his retreat, the shrew mole made her appearance on the wall. It was in the woods, in a place of deep shadows, that she lived. She bounced along the wall, according to Ann, in a state of trepidation. She must have had a nest with young close by, and resented the barking dog and the humans trying to help him catch the woodchuck. In the excitement of my arrival with bucket and bar, the shrew was forgotten, and I missed the opportunity of seeing the tiny creature in the flesh. In all our hundred acres "more or less" of largely wild land there must be, one would think, at least a pair of shrews to the acre, but the one picked up on the wharfing is the only bag of shrew I ever made on the place.

Stretching this shrew just a trifle on the yardstick I could make him measure, tail and all, a scant four inches in length. Weighing him was out of the question with the apparatus I had. Scales with the nicety and little weights of an apothecary's balance would be necessary for that. The shrew was browner than mouse-color on his back, and mouse



grey on his belly. He differed most from a mouse in having the top of his tail well haired. That tail was just over an inch and three-quarters long. His hind legs, a half-inch long, gave him a kangaroo-like suggestion, in comparison to his so short fore legs. So thin and fragile they looked one wondered how they could drive forward even his so slight body. No ears could be discerned above the sleek fur of his head. His long proboscis-like nose endowed him with an elephantine expression, particularly absurd in a creature of such insect-like proportions.

It is, perhaps, the survival of the child in us that makes us, in certain moods, delight in miniatures. It is not always the smallness itself of an object that delights us, but its smallness in comparison with the largeness of an object of like sort that is more familiar to us. We delight in the doll over against the human, the bantam over against the Brahma, the crayfish over against the lobster. So it is that sometimes we treasure the johnny-jump-up more than the pansy, the goldfish more than the carp, the humming-bird more than the heron, the two-inch long basket of white oak splints more than the two-bushel one of like shape and material, the wooden rum keg of two-quart size more than the hogshead. In almost any mood we will instinctively hold dear a watch with porcelain face on which is a scene from Eden with Adam and Eve and the tree with the forbidden fruit. If around the edge of the picture on porcelain runs a wriggling snake as the second-hand of the watch, the cup of bliss for some of us will run over. Little butterflies, blue-tinted, and no larger than clothes moths, will make our hearts leap up, and little beetles like jewels with glows of green and gold, and twin flowers, and the blossoms of sundew, and the gardens of stunted evergreens from Japan.

As pleased as we are at six over our first gum boots, we are fifty years afterwards to examine a ship's model, or a

Solomon's temple so reduced in size it will rest upon a tea table, or a covered wooden bridge a man can carry under his arm. The digit question done on a thumbnail, a Bible you can drop into a thimble, a clay jug of so diminutive size all it will hold of mountain dew is a drop, will often rouse more talk among Tom and Dick and Harry than will a rainbow, a shower of meteors, or a heaven wide aurora.

If there are those who deplore such a condition of human interest let them remember that man from early days has imagined as little many of the things he has greatly loved, his fairies, his cupids, his Santa Klauses and reindeer. Let such remember, too, that nature itself will dwarf things to loveliness, gentians in Alpine meadows to the lowness of bluets, rhododendrons on Mt. Lafayette to partridge height, willows and spruces on Mt. Washington to so stunted and prostrate a growth they will hardly hide you when you throw yourself upon them for a noon time nap.

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## The Misses Holden of Rumney

[for W. P. HARBESON]

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NOTHING has come my way to tell me of the Misses Holden of Rumney save their bound folio labelled "Music" in letters of gold. There is, it is true, an index on an inserted page of foolscap by one of them, possibly the Miss Lulie S. Holden whose name is on the next page after. The name of Miss S. L. Holden appears on the first page of the music of the "Rainbow Schottish." Miss Lulie has written "Rumney, N. H., 1860" after her name, and "M. A. A." inscribes the schottish to "S. L. Holden, Rumney, N. H." In the inscribing of "Even of Thee," "from A. H. Cram," we learn that the "S" of her first name stands for "Sarah," and again in the inscription of "Is it anybody's business If a lady has a beau?" Cousin Lyman, though he presents "Danderup's" composition with his "regards," is, perhaps, mildly joshing his Cousin Sarah.

It is Lulie's writing, I think, in the index to the fifty pieces in the book, for the L, S and H of her initials agree exactly with initial letters among the tables of the index. It is a hand typical of the decade before the Civil War, but a little rounder and more decided in character than much of the slender and delicate penmanship of the time.

As you would expect, most of the music was printed in

Boston, and by Oliver Ditson. The first number in the book, "Rainbow Schottish," was, however, published in New York and by Firth, Pond and Co., Stephen C. Foster's publishers. Two of Foster's songs are included, "Fairy Belle" and "Gentle Annie."

Beside the schottish there are sixteen other dances, four quicksteps, four hornpipes, five polkas and three waltzes. There are three marches and twenty-five songs. The compositions range from Beethoven's Azalia waltz to "rights and lefts," popular melodies arranged by Bissell for "two performers on the Piano Forte," Bellak's "Dewdrops," songs for darky minstrels such as "The Old Cabin Home," and wails of death and dying. One of these last named, "Over the river they beckon to me," is the one piece whose music is missing. Only the cover remains with its lithograph of angels in effortless flight. Did some one tear it out to carry off to sing at some funeral service and forget to return it to the portfolio of the Misses Holden?

The earliest day of publication of any composition in the volume is 1830 for "Bring Flowers," with words by Mrs. Hemans and air by J. Worseley. Was that sung by the mother of the sisters and passed down to them? It is yellow with age, stained by brown spots, and worn by use. The date of the latest is 1860, when "Annie Lisle" was "entered according to act of Congress." That there are so many German songs in the collection, and several with the words in the original as well as in translation, instances an absence of provincialism that those who think our American yesterday benighted will find it difficult to understand.

Singing school was an institution in 1860, when these "musical pieces" were collected and bound, but I doubt if many of them figured in the group singing as it was practiced out in the country schoolhouses. There was undoubt-



A TRIUMPH OF ROMANCE



edly a piano in the home of the Misses Holden, or a melodeon, or a seraphine. There is a definitely young ladyish atmosphere about their portfolio. The girls had, I am sure, all the airs and graces of their time. I have met a survival of the young lady of the eighteen-fifties in an old lady of today, one who played most successfully at being as was her grandmother. She, too, had her piano, and a music rack full of loose sheet music and bound portfolios, all of it of yesterday. Yet in a house not far away I bought at an auction the cheap songs of twenty years ago. You will find Irving Berlin and Stephen C. Foster side by side. In this very collection of the Misses Holden that Almack's Waltz by Beethoven is found along with that one time "popular number" with Negro minstrels, "A Little More Cider." One wonders if Thomas Hardy liked the latter as well as that he danced to at Almack's.

The collection shows the influences of themes from American Indian life that had come to the fore a generation earlier with Cooper. These ladies of Rumney, in their childhood, knew the big mountain of their neighborhood as Moosehillock. That name may have been so spelled through a false etymology, but theirs was a time in which Indian names were being substituted far and near for the English names the early settlers had given to all but the most memorably named rivers and mountains and valleys. Moosilauke replaced Moosehillock. In our corner of New Hampshire Chase River falls into Cold River, Cold River into the Bear Camp, the Bear Camp into the Ossipee and the Ossipee into the Saco. It is only the Indian names accepted in early times that have come down to us traditionally, in this case those of the larger rivers. In local parlance only Chocorua of our Sandwich mountains has an Indian name. Paugus and Passaconaway and Wonalancet are names plastered on the mountains by the early topographers.

The next to the last number in the collection of the Misses Holden is "The Freed Birds: A Quartette as sung by the Shawmut vocalists." That those who sung the song and those who listened to it might understand the symbolism of the ritual it discloses a careful note is printed on its cover:

Among the superstitions of the Senecas is one which, for its singular beauty, is already well known. When a maiden dies, they imprison a young bird until it first begins to try its powers of song, and then, loading it with kisses and caresses, they loose its bonds over her grave, in the belief that it will not fold its wing, nor close its eye, until it has flown to the spirit land, and delivered its precious burden of affection to the "loved and lost." "It is not infrequent," says an Indian historian, "to see twenty or thirty birds loosened at once, over one grave."

It is a wonder a picture of the rites was not used. There are a good few lithographs in the portfolio. That for the "Rainbow Schottish" is in color, brown and green and blue. It depicts gnarled and windblown cedars by the seaside, with a gentleman pointing out the wonders of the deep to the lady hanging on his arm. They are properly chaperoned by a lady seated under a parasol close by.

There is another lithograph, just black and white, of Major Ben. Perley Poore of Newbury, Mass., pushing a barrel of apples on a wheelbarrow from his home town to Boston, which city he reached on the third day at half past two. His progress was the result of an election bet with Colonel Robert I. Burbank. There is a delightful country scene on the cover of "Wait for the Wagon." A lover holds the hand of his lass by a stile. A steep roofed farmhouse is in the middle distance left. The cart, just such a one as you see Biddeford way in Maine in a potato field, is in middle distance right. Two sugar-loaf-shaped mountains come up in the background. There was romance for the two ladies of Rumney in these scenes, I have no doubt, as there was in the quavers



and roulades with which they embellished these sentimental numbers. There were delightful evenings for young folks, no doubt, in Rumney, through the journeys far and near these songs and dances took them and through tunes that set feet to tapping and hearts pitter patter.

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## Old Cider

[for PLINY AINGER]

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HE was but a semi-punctilious potter scribed the legend "old Cider" on the quart mug of redware. He was careful to put a period after "cider," but the "o" of "old" is but a small letter. He returned to proper form with the capital "C" of "Cider." The mug is masterwork, with two raised lines a half inch apart a scant inch from the rim and repeated again a full inch from the base. It is glazed a dark brown on the outside and a bright sienna within. Its heavy but properly proportioned handle, three inches long and an inch wide, reaches to within a half inch of its rim.

You might take these raised lines to be the hoops of a barrel, but it is a straight-sided mug with no suggestion of a barrel about it save the lines, and they are but two double lines and not the four you would look for in a copy of a barrel. Nor is there any other common piece of cooperage the mug approaches. Flour and sugar buckets are truncated cones and soft-maple-sugar tubs flare out from bottom to top. Nor is it squat enough to be modelled after those straight sided fish tubs in which came in old times smoked herring or salt cod.

The mug came from the home of Judge Dearborn in Meredith, a home whose proprietor had inherited a good

deal of old household gear from a Kidder. The mug is not unlike certain pieces from the Gill pottery west of Plymouth. Its glaze and form differentiate it from the work of our potter Bennetts of Moultonborough. It was made for men with hard heads. "Old Cider" can mean nothing but hard cider, and he who could toss off, and be thereafter unperturbed, a full quart of hard cider, was such a man as there are few of today.

One wonders as to the mug's date of turning. Hard cider has been a drink second only to rum, domestic or West Indian, in public favor for as long as the country about Lake Winnepesaukee has been permanently settled, say, since the close of the War of the Revolution. Rum got the start of cider in our north country, because of the slowness of our little apple orchards to come into fruiting. It took the trees that the first settlers planted at least fifteen years after being set out to yield crops that made any appreciable amount of cider. That you find sales of rum in every old account book, and few sales of cider, may be attributed to the fact that most folks, in the years with which the account books were concerned, the years after 1790, had themselves sufficient supplies of home made stuff.

It must be admitted, however, that all tradition points to rum as the more appreciated drink. For all its excellence folks felt there was something plebeian about cider. "Rum, Sirs, is the stuff to drink," was a slogan sounded loud and wide throughout New England. Gradually, though, rum came to be too costly for general use. It was pretty well supplanted by cider after the Civil War. What brought about the disappearance of beer and kindred beverages, which the brew houses on old places along the coast attest were the approved drinks in the earliest days of settlement, is not so easy to account for. It may be that the status of malt liquors, as foods rather than as stimulants, made them

less desirable to men who wanted escape through strong drink. Rum could make you forget your troubles, even if it brought you new ones. Hard cider, too, is potent. Though it makes you miserable in the end, it makes the world rosy to you for a while.

One hopes that the heroes who emptied quart mugs at four quaffs, as a mighty man of our neighborhood is said to have done, were so rugged from their out-of-door lives that the deep drinks were no more than gently heart-warming to them. A family of seven in our neighborhood put down fifty fifty-gallon barrels of cider when they had the apples to make so much. They had the apples most years. They "calliated" a gallon a day per man and per woman would keep them in fine fettle. Or so the neighbor said they "calliated." The seven are all dead now these thirty years, but all lived out close to the allotted span of years, and all but one were steady and God-fearing folk. That one always maintained that his lapses were due to his not being a daily drinker, like his brothers and sisters. The kindly neighbors were inclined to agree to this explanation. Was it not reasonable, they said, if you inoculate a man with smallpox to guard him against smallpox that you should give a man hard cider daily to guard him against drunkenness?

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## The Town of White Topazes

[I.M. BENNETT MC DANIEL]

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THERE is no end to New Hampshire. That is, there is no end to all there is to interest and charm and awaken wonder in the hundreds of mountains and hills, of intervals and valleys all over the state. There is no end to the thousands of absorbing stories of men and women who have lived here in the country's three centuries of settlement by Europeans. I mean, of course, that there is not time, even in a long life, for one man to more than sense what there is to be known of what has happened to people between the sea and Canada, between the Connecticut River and the frontier of Maine. In the quarter of a century that I have summered here I have but begun to scratch the surface of things.

This is my apology for knowing almost nothing of Chatham until the summer of nineteen thirty-seven. I knew its place on the map, I had read what account there is of it in the *History of Carroll County*, I had often looked at a house very like our own from which neighbors of ours had moved up to that town, I had heard Charles Fellows tell a story of a member of the legislature from Chatham whom he had met during his own services at Concord, I had heard of an Appalachian Mountain Club Camp there, I had heard

of the new road through Evans' Notch that was to give the town an outlet north, I knew that for all its previous days Chatham had been a "dead end" town.

Then came our trip through Evans' Notch from the north, and the revelation of Chatham as a region different distinctly from all the many towns I had visited in New Hampshire. It was not exactly that Chatham was day before yesterday to me, another century than ours, as it always seems to a cousin in Lovell, across the state line in Maine. It was not wholly the brick houses so seldom found in other remote intervals, houses that spoke of a former prosperity. It was not that the mountains round about, which I had noted on maps, from Philip Carragain's of 1816 to the latest government report, were set apart in any way from other New Hampshire mountains. Baldface, to be sure, was a good name for a mountain. "Pigwacket Mt. formerly Kearsarge" recalled old controversies I had read of. "Bold Robin Mts." was a name to remember. "Gemini" must be a two-pointed mountain named by some one with Latin or an acquaintance with the signs of the zodiac. There was much to arouse speculation here, but I had not noted particularly in what town these peaks were situated. There was an appeal came to me in Chatham from the moment we rolled down out of Evans' Notch, an appeal that I could not explain to myself. Nor am I sure that I today wholly understand that appeal.

All that I was sure of on this first visit to Chatham was that this was a place with a difference from other places. It was, perhaps, the isolation of the place, the suggestion of old cultivation the staunch houses insisted upon, and, perhaps, memories of treasure trove fabled to have been acquired here. It was with no surprise I discovered, reading again at home on the night after our visit, the article on Chatham that brings the *History of Carroll County* to its close, that

semi-precious stones were found here: "white topazes almost rivalling the diamond in hardness and splendor, lapis lazuli, beryls, garnets, etc." Instantly there sprang to mind that this was Chatham's distinction. It was "The Town of White Topazes."

I knew from that moment I should not rest content until I had in my hands specimens of the white topazes. Inquiry made to right and left brought out the fact that nearly everybody but myself knew of the gems. The lady of Lovell said that many of her neighbors had the topazes set in rings, that she had thought them diamonds when she first saw them so set, and wondered where the money came from to buy so many diamonds as folks wore. The first cut topaz I saw had been set in a ring by a jeweller of Concord. It was owned by the lady from East Conway. The cut topaz had not the flashing brilliance and changing scintillations of color of the diamond. It was diamond hard, but not diamond bright. Afterwards, when I had seen several topazes that were cut in Keene, I could well understand how easy it would be for others of the uninitiated like myself to mistake them for precious stones. Fortunately, they are only semi-precious, worth perhaps four dollars the karat.

It was on a high hill in Maine over against Chatham, a high hill that looks off northwestward to Baldface and Washington, that I bought two small "rhombic prisms" of white topaz. Bennett McDaniel, who sold them to me, had cut them out of a pocket on Baldface in Chatham. He humanizes their shape by saying that what the books call "rhombic" is really like the angles of a hiproofed house. Mack is a man can handle stone, a mason and dresser of granite. He has built all sorts of gaily colored minerals into the walls on either side of the front steps to his house, green apatite, silvery mica, black tourmaline. He has mined out other stones than the white topazes, azure blue stones



of lapis lazuli that are too soft to cut properly, fluospar, a very dark and clear garnet. If I should have the topazes cut, he said I should take them to a diamond cutter. The average lapidary would not be able to make a good job of them.

A gentle detached sort of man, Bennett could not talk freely of his prospecting of topaz with so many of us about and all but one of us strangers. His habit in "topazing" was to go over to Baldface of a morning, snoop about for the stones during the afternoon, sleep on the mountain and hunt stones again the next morning, returning to his home above Lovell the second afternoon. I could only guess at what his joys of discovery are, but I have no doubt they were as great as those of the trapper who finds he has caught a fishercat on Kearsarge or of the fisherman who lands a six pound brook trout from Mountain Pond. He has known all his life where the topaz pockets are, having been handed on that information by men of an older generation. It is fully seventy-five years, he says, that the white topazes of Baldface have been known and sought for.

I can imagine him sitting on his steps set with minerals from Deer Hill and Sloop Mountain and Baldface, looking off to those heights and hugging to heart the thought of all the little treasures that lie concealed in the mountains. They are his to take, what he can find of them, semi-precious gems the ages have been preparing for him to gather. He told us he had planned another expedition there before snow flew, but that he did not know whether he should make it.

Another love of his is two greenhouses, sunk snugly into the hillside east of his house. In one of these he has a bunk slung high like a ship's bunk, in which to spend the hours of cold nights keeping his fires up. He burns only wood, so when the thermometer drops below zero and the wind is northwest, he is up and down all night long feeding his fires. It would be a tragedy to him to have freeze his poin-

settas and geraniums and houseleeks, his tomato plants for setting out and his cabbages and lettuces. As he naps there his dreams are, no doubt, not only of his charges threatened by the cold, but of these vari-colored gems he has found over westward, gems more brilliant than the zenith-high stars of white and silver and ruddy light the sub-zero nights kindle to wild flares.

Baldface and Deer Hill and Sloop Mountain are lyric names to him. The interval of Chatham, the lower part of it, we can see as we talk with him, its hayed fields and white houses bathed in the mellow light of early afternoon. He remembers when that interval was cleared land, all of it to the bases of the mountains, in North Chatham as well as lower down. All this prospect is to him chiefly background to his prospecting, though he prizes his place as a sightly place, too. It is almost balmy here today, with a southwest breeze dallying by, and the cloud-capped Washington high in the northwest.

As we look off we realize that the clouds are lifting. In a few minutes whiteness is revealed as they are blown higher and higher. As we watch, the whole long line of clouds is driven away. Between and above two nearer peaks the broad shoulders of the storied mountain stand out in the pure white of just fallen snow. This was the first of "The Crystal Hills" in old days, but it does not flash like a crystal now. It does so flash, McDaniel tells me, in certain slants of light, or when the snow has a coat of ice from frozen rain. You pray that some day it may be given to you to see Mt. Washington so flashing, a great white topaz against the western sky.

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## April in Albany

[I.M. DANIEL E. OWEN]

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FOR many years I had heard good talk from Dan Owen of Biddeford. Bits of his letters about evening grosbeaks, about Christmas wreaths of ground pine and creeping jennie and wintergreen, and about catching and curing cod were as good, too, as his talk, but it wasn't until the end of August in nineteen thirty-nine, when he was past seventy and I was little short of that allotted span of years, that I heard him let himself go and tell what feeling there was in that old heart of his.

"Yes, we have been cruising about by car now and then this spring and summer," he said, "when we had the strength and the call came to us. We were caught a month ago in that cloudburst up in Baldwin and ran for twenty minutes through rain so heavy it ran down the road as if it were the bed of a brook. It would be no exaggeration to say as if it were the bed of a river. That cloudburst took out fifteen or eighteen little bridges and stopped traffic round Hiram so some of the roads are impassable even now.

"One of the places we have been going to oftenest of late is Albany Interval. We ran up there early last spring. The road had been kept open all winter because there is government work there. It was late April but there had

been a thaw. Hundreds of little streams were running across the road. There was one every few lengths of the car. There was snow still in the woods, two feet of it, perhaps. One of the little streams splashed up muddy water all over the windshield. I couldn't see before me. I stopped to get out and wipe off the windshield.

"It was all so nice I didn't get to work right away. There was the sound of water everywhere. You could hear the little streams trickling and clucking across the road. Below was the roar of Swift River. It was just the right background for the sounds about us, the wind in the evergreens first among them. The hardwood trees were, of course, leafless, the pines and hemlocks and spruces three colors of bright green in the spring sun. There were purples everywhere, and soft blues, and whites and silvers. There were whitethroats whistling, and big bouncing fox sparrows fairly bursting with their gentle chirrupings. The pewees had come, and the song sparrows. There were robins calling from the tree tops, and bluebirds wherever a clearing and old apple trees showed farms had been. Yes, and the hermit thrushes had come, and they were singing.

"It was a while before I could get to wiping off that windshield. And the smell of it all! It wasn't the wood smell yet, buds bursting and grass growing and that first sweetness of the hobblebush blossoms, but there was a smell of earth working up through the snow, carried down by those hundreds of little streams running across the road, and the smell of river water rushing to the sea, the sea from which we had come. There was a piney scent on the air, a sprucey scent, a hemlocky scent. Yes, it was a while before I got the windshield wiped off. Yes, it was nice. I liked it all quite a lot."

It was not Dan's beloved Milton I thought of as Dan talked, but that other Puritan poet so near to us, he who so

loved New Hampshire, and knew so well its Monadnock, Preacher Emerson. It was this one of the hundreds of truths he has uttered that I thought of:

Spring still makes spring in the mind  
When sixty years are told.

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## “Thee’d Be Pleased to See Her Go”

[for PARSON HARROLD]

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THERE’S an old story still going the rounds about John Stevenson, Augusta’s father, and Dr. Boyden,” said Leander as he rested himself a mite sawing out a dead branch above his head in the old Porter tree. “John had a very good looking mare in his paddock that he seldom drove out on the road. She was hardly old enough, he said, to be worked hard. Passing one day, Dr. Boyden, who had an eye for a pretty bit of horseflesh, asked John if he wished to sell her. John was not quick to quote a price. Eventually, though, they came to terms and Dr. Boyden became the possessor of Anastasia.

“The Doctor inquired, of course, whether she was a free driver, and John declared: ‘Wyatt, there’ll be times thee’d be pleased to see her go.’ Dr. Boyden soon found Anastasia was balky and when he ran across John taxed him for selling the beast without revealing so large a shortcoming. John said: ‘Friend Wyatt, I am afraid thee did not pay sufficient heed to my words. Does thee not remember I said to thee: There’ll be times thee’d be pleased to see her go? Have there not been such times when she put back her ears and refused to budge? Would thee not then have been pleased to see her go? Then thee’d be pleased to see her go.’”

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## The Stripping Pail and Its Fellows

[for PHILIP WATSON]

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IT never struck me until June of 1940 that there was a time when all milk pails were of wood. It was a stripping pail from Effingham, a little affair of no more than a gallon capacity that Harry Blanchard had put aside for me that made me realize the obvious truth that had never occurred to me. A stripping pail was used to strip the cow of what little milk remained in her udder after the calf had had its fill. This stripping pail was a bit of perfect cooperage with hoops, three in number that covered all its six inch high sides. They are the thinnest hoops I have ever seen, ash I take it about basswood staves and above basswood bottom.

I had been brought up on stories about the farm in Chester County, Pennsylvania, on which my mother was born. There were cows there, and a springhouse in which the milk was cooled and the cream rose, and in which the butter and cottage cheese were kept. I had not understood Aunt Rachael when she spoke of the milk pans and cream pots resting on the stone floor of the springhouse, a floor covered with six inches of water. I had not realized that these utensils were of redware pottery. The milk pans I knew were tin, red-painted on the outside, and very like in color to the unglazed red of their predecessors, the pottery pans. The milking

bucket into which our cow was milked was of tin, and it never occurred to me that the milking buckets that preceded those of tin must have been of wood. One doesn't see how the wooden pail could have been kept as clean as a tin pail. Yet to a much later date all the paraphernalia for butter making were of wood, churn, tubs, rollers, moulds, smoothers, and they could be scrubbed scrupulously clean.

My neglect to visualize the use of the milking pail of wood was all the more unaccountable in that I was brought up with wooden buckets and wooden tubs for washing. Indeed I have a wooden water bucket to this day and I have picked up old oaken pails for use in water wells. Wooden buckets, tall and narrow, we used, too, for cooling champagne, filling the bottle round about with ice. Wooden, too, were the little buckets we had in childhood to gather sand in when we went to Atlantic City or Cape May. It was the association of so greasy a product as milk made it unsociable with a wooden milking bucket. I have no repulsion toward water drawn from a well in a wooden bucket, though at our summer home in the White Mountains we use a bucket of galvanized iron or of agateware in the well.

I now know that another bit of cooperage I have used to gather vegetables in is a stripping pail. It was painted a grey long ago, but hardly, I take it before its use as a stripping pail was over and done with. It is not likely that any good farmer would have been allowed by the housewife had him in charge to use a painted utensil for such a purpose. After remembering my six quart stripping pail that I used for gathering peas and beans, my thoughts began to reach down under the eaves of the attic for other pails possibly stored away there. Search brought to the light two pails, one a little stripping pail holding only two quarts, and the other a twelve-quart milking pail. It was but another illustration of the efficacy of that advice given me years ago

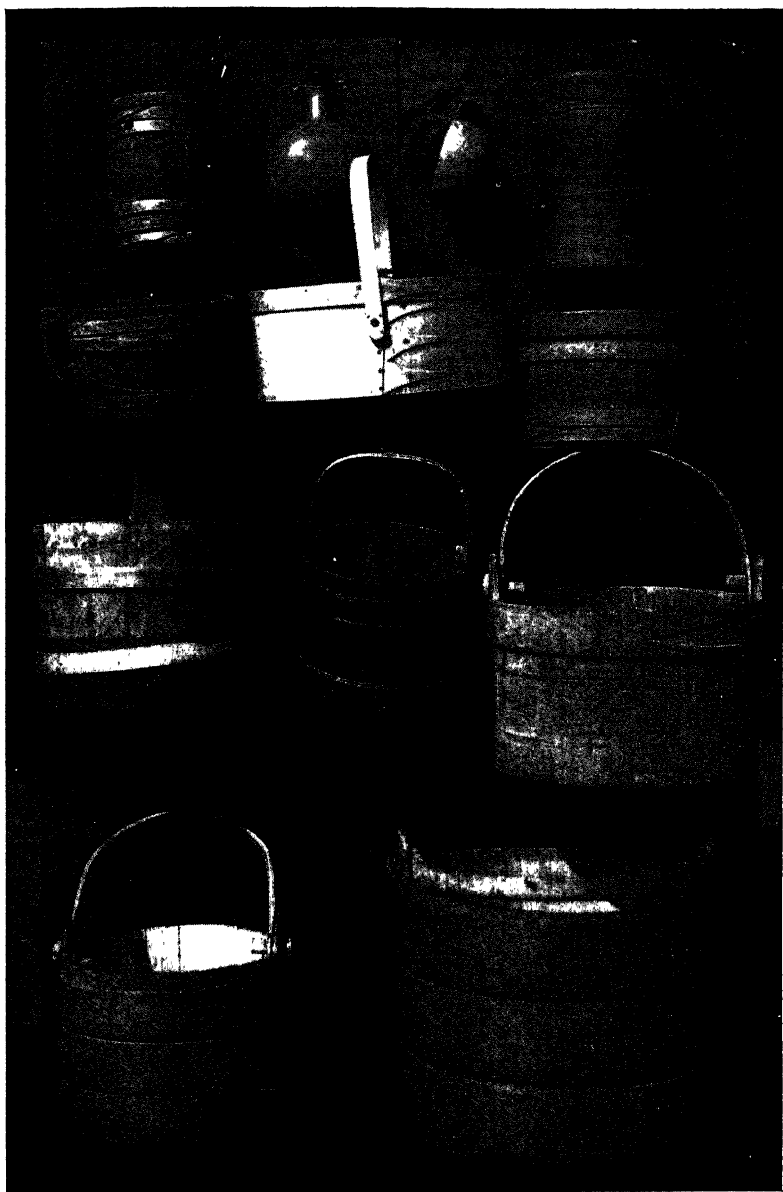


by a onetime student turned antiquer that it would be well for me now and then to go antiquing in my own house. "You can't possibly remember all you have," he declared, and sent me on a hunt that revealed a little brass *schmutz amsel* I had clean forgotten I had.

You would expect this milking pail to be of white pine or of basswood. It was of neither, but of bull pine. The preference for bull pine for chests I had explained to my own satisfaction on the ground that the greater amount of resin in bull pine as compared with white pine would have made the chests less likely to be visited by moths. In the lowlands of southeastern Pennsylvania I had explained church pews of bull pine by the fact that white pine was found no nearer than the highlands of Pennsylvania and that the local joiners and cabinet makers used what was to hand. Why, however, in a countryside where both basswood and white pine grew widely bull pine was preferred was not so easy to explain.

Even after I had visualized an old tie-up with stanchels holding a Brown Surrey cow and a bearded oldster with shaven upper lip milking her, I had not visualized him milking into so large a receptacle as a twelve-quart pail. These original cattle of New England were not held to be plentiful milkers, nor were the Devons and Shorthorns and Herefords that were the first all purpose cattle bred carefully here. These breeds began to come in just about a hundred years ago, while all the milking pails were still of wood. Seven or eight quarts at a milking was considered all you could ask of a cow until Alderneys and Jerseys and Guernseys came in. The yields of certain Holsteins and Ayrshires would not have been believed possible in the days of the wooden milking pails.

The twelve-quart milking pail is twelve inches in diameter, eight inches high on the outside and seven inches high on



COOPERAGE



the inside. Its handle is slung from two headed pins a half inch in diameter and two inches long let through staves with rounded ends that protrude for two inches higher than the nine other staves of which the pail is made. Very slender pins let through the headed pins prevent the handle, which is of ash, from slipping off at the headed pins. Three two and a half inch wide hoops that almost touch each other reinforce the strength of the bucket as well as hold it together. It is made of stuff, both staves and hoops, shaved very thin, and it is incredibly light for its size.

The little two-quart pail seems to be of basswood staves and hoops of ash. It may be, like the three-quart one, a stripping pail, but one wonders was it used for goats as well as cows. The general use of goats in frontier places in old days is a chapter of domestic economy not yet written. They are common in old prints of all the White Mountain region, but their prevalence at one time is completely forgotten. Where one sees goats today, one suspects the folks that have them are foreigners. They are not plenty enough at that to have a block of advertizements to themselves in the *Weekly Market Bulletin* of the New Hampshire Department of Agriculture, but are listed together with sheep under the caption, "Sheep and Goats." Those advertized do not always have their breed designated. One is just "pet billy goat" and another "young nanny goat." Others are listed as Alpine, Nubian and Toggenberg.

If this little pail was used in milking a nanny goat, it was in that old day before the creatures were recognized as of this breed or that. This pail's staves are held together not by hoops that practically cover all its sides, but simply by one hoop at the top and another at the bottom. This pail is unpainted on the inside and on the outside painted that green that one finds so often on cheese boxes. There are folks who associate it with the Shakers, but I can find no

evidence it was a color used there to paint the very workmanlike boxes, generally oval, that they turned out. There is no doubt there were master coopers among them at Canterbury and at Enfield, and, over the border into Maine, at Alfred. The one color I have found on a Shaker box is the red madder that was so universally used on utensils and furniture all over New Hampshire. This box, its copper rivets say, is later in construction than the pails. It bears on its back the inscription, "F. G. Young, Enfield, N. H."

At the auction at which I bought a curious three-quart pail they called it a noggin. It had a handle made by allowing a stave to extend five inches above its fellows and having it so shaped it narrowed down below its rounded top so you could get a good grasp of it. There went on among my immediate neighbors so animated a discussion over coggins and noggins that they were rebuked by the auctioneer, who would not brook anyone other than himself making more noise than the shouted bids. It is not of a workmanship approaching that of the stripping pails and milking pails. Indeed, no other cooperage I have ever seen is such masterwork as they are.

Few folks under fifty remember wooden milking pails in use. Tin peddlers were roaming through all middle New Hampshire by the time of the Civil War. Yet in remote districts where there were good coopers milk pails of wood were made and used until 1890. Over the border in Canada they held on as late or later. One of my neighbors born in Canada remembers her father making both sap buckets and milking pails of wood. She carries to this day a memento of her father's tools. As a child she thought she would finish off with a plane some cedar staves for a bucket. It slipped and took off the top of the first knuckle on the little finger of her right hand. What she called cedar was, I suppose, arbor vitae, of which so many "cedar" shingles were made.

She recalls, too, the elaborate paraphernalia for sapping her father made. He bored out wooden pipes to connect the sap buckets, as they hung on trees, with large sap containers, arranging the apparatus on a hillside so that the sap would run from the funnel-like buckets into pipes of wood that would gather the contents of a half dozen buckets or more into the container.

She said there was no difficulty in keeping the wooden milk buckets sweet and clean. There was plenty of hot water in those days, and plenty of sun, and plenty of soft soap, and plenty of scrubbing power. You scrubbed the milk buckets out with your own homemade soft soap and scalding water, you hung them on the paling fence of the doorway where it ran by the kitchen door, and, if you did your job properly, those wooden buckets were every bit as clean as any tin bucket of them all. I wonder, however, if there were not exceptions to this cleanliness of wooden milk buckets even in the best families.

Harry Blanchard, when he sold me the stripping pail, showed me that the top hoop had been mouse nibbled. He was very sure the culprit was a mouse, and not a rat. "There is mouse nibbling," he said, "and rat gnawing and hedgehog chawing, and this is mouse nibbling." There is no sign, on the ash of the hoop nibbled, that there was any deposit of milk there, or any greasiness, but there must have been something the mouse was after. Could it have been salt, salt from cream or butter or even from the sweat of hands? The hedgehogs will gnaw down the sides of sap buckets left in our barn in Sandwich for three inches or four for only such saltiness as is left there by hands that have grasped the top of the bucket.

"Yes, that's a stripping pail," said Mrs. Henry Quimby. "The creature gnawed it knew it was soaked with cream, whether it showed, or not. That's the richest milk, you

know, that comes last and when the folks that used the pail grew old and hadn't the strength to scrub it clean, perhaps some richness got into the hoop, or, more likely, under the hoop, and the mouse smelled it out and nibbled through the hoop to find it. There's no creature has a sharper nose than a mouse."

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## The Holy Fourth

[for PEARL GOLDBERG]

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FOURTH of July was as nearly a holy day as we had in the Protestant past of New England. In Lucaston there was always a parade of "The Horribles," a definite harking back, in its fantastic costuming, to certain Saints day processions in Old England, with moments of drama in it and rough clowning and hullabaloo *in excelsis*. There were high piles of barrels burned in the village square, a corner store and a number of houses showered with stones, and such excitement created that a most continent oldster rushed out of his house one Fourth, seized a bundle of shingles from the long pile ready for reroofing, threw it on the dying bonfire and sent the flames leaping again into the sky. Again and again he replenished the fire until he had wasted at least fifty dollars worth of grade A shingles of arbor vitae.

After the oldster came to his senses and had hidden himself crestfallen, in his house, the crowd packed itself into automobiles and, with horns honking and sirens screaming, set out to visit the homes of the most godly and dignified members of the community. The celebrators would run into one driveway gate and out the other, giving ironical cheers for the man they were razzing. Where there was but one



entrance to a place, they had to content themselves with creeping by on low gear, horning, sirening, yelling in demoniac fashion, in the hope of bringing the old hornet out of his nest.

In our own Sandwich, on Fourth of July, 1940, the Seventh Day Adventist Church in the north part of the town, long deserted and falling down, was set afire and burned to the last sill. In another part of the town a house that had been partially burned was finished off in a holocaust. There was little value in either structure and no animosity towards anybody who had any interest in either. It was simply an outburst of destructiveness, a midsummer night's madness of the very order of such feeling as Hardy records lay behind the bonfires on the south coast of England in *The Return of the Native*, or Sudermann in *Johannisfeuer*. Under the destructiveness there may have been some traditional compulsion, some conviction that burning was proper and even necessary on the Fourth of July. If there was, it would be to some an excuse, a justification, for the destructiveness. We have similar outbursts in Pennsylvania Dutchland at full moon in the height of harvest.

Divination by sacrificial fires is a practice of many primitive religions. We call it pyromancy when it is performed as a rite by priests of a cult. We call a kindred practice pyromania when it drives a quiet man of middle age to burn down five houses, strung out a half mile apart on a back road, his own house first of the five. Or when it sends out a boy, on the pretense of netting night moths to set fire to house after house of a prosperous seaside resort on the Maine coast. Or when it inspires a cook in a lumber camp to coax the dying embers of a forest fire into reactivity, first here and then there, as the fire-fighters have successfully gotten the better of them on one front after another.

The burning down of homes for the insurance upon them

is not always done wholly with profiting intent. A man who was not caught at this game until he was past three score and ten after a half century of the practice confessed that he had joy of his eyes in seeing the buildings burn as well as satisfaction to his pocket from the insurance money.

There is undoubtedly intoxication for some persons in red, for red in all its forms. It is because he has ecstasy in seeing the red fire engines roaring down the street that the crank will sound false alarms of fire. The normal man, too, has joy in red. It is, after all, the color of life, and it is natural to have joy in it. The fires of dawn and sunset are for many of us an appreciable part of the joy of life. Only tonight our whole family traipsed out to rejoice in a new moon that was a sickle of crimson against the golden afterglow. We all rejoice in the red of our flag, in the red our clapboarded houses were painted before white lead superseded red lead. A neighbor of ours can hardly wait until he can paint his great barn red, the color a barn should be, he says, the color it was when it was first painted in 1840. Another neighbor has all his buildings red, house, barn, hen houses, milk house, water house, garage. White, he avers, is a cold color, all right when all the world is green, all wrong when all the world is white, as it is hereabouts often five months of the twelve.

Ask this housewife why she is so partial to scarlet runner beans, that housewife why all her dahlias are deep red, a third why she has a crimson rambler-rose on a trellis by her piazza? The answer is phrased differently by each you question, but all the answers are based on the common denominator that "there is no color like red." Milady likes to blossom forth in a red dress with brass buttons, though she would rather refer to the brass as gold. No drum major is so applauded for appearance alone as he who is resplendent in a red uniform. New Hampshire Red fowls owe

their popularity, as did the Rhode Island Reds from which they sprung, not only to their superior utility qualities, but to their intensity of color. There is no color makes so warm a spot in the landscape as red. It is the favorite color for the watch towers of fire wardens, and, banded with white, it was yesterday a favorite color for light houses. Red is the color for fire crackers and Chinese lanterns, for costumes for winter sports, sleighing and skating, tobogganning and skiing. It is no accident that Santa Claus is apparelled in scarlet.

Is red not, too, the proper color for the devil? Yes, for the devil and for his vice, ancestors of the horrors that parade in such harlequin attire and so raucously on the Fourth of July. But what about red being non-Puritan, a world's color and of the flesh as well as of the devil? Red did not trouble the Puritan. He loved best of the Bible its reddest book, "The Revelation of St. John the Divine," with its red horses and its red dragons, its red flames and its fiery furnaces. He planted red roses by his doorstep. Red cheeks allured him, demure or bold the maiden. He red maddered his furniture that was not red by the nature of its wood, as mahogany and cherry are, and red maddered those woods a redder red as often as not. He red-leaded his houses. Bright bay was his favorite color for horses, and Devon red, as soon as Red Devons were introduced, became his favorite color for cattle. To this day he never speaks of the Astrakan apple save as the Red Astrakan. He saw God's hand in the red of meteors and lightning. The Fourth of July, with the red flares of its orgiastic night, was in the very nature of things, his Holy Day. The Puritan, in every way as human as the cavalier, never denied that red was the color of life.

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## He Honored His Hounds

[*for MARY and FRED ASHFIELD*]

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IT is not the least honored feature of the high farm of the Ashfields in Vermont, this little cemetery of the hounds of its former owner. His hunting was what gave the master of the hounds individuality among his neighbors. There are so many farms with far prospects on the hills above Bradford that the great view from the farmhouse windows across the Connecticut Valley to Moosilauke and on beyond Moosilauke to Lafayette did not serve to distinguish the Farr-Barrett place. That Barrett, however, put up field stones to mark the graves of his dogs did distinguish the place.

Those dogs had brought him the greatest joy he had known. In the old days his pal and he, in a buggy, and with two dogs aboard, had voyaged hither and yon to wherever was good cover for foxes, had let the dogs loose, and had known in their bringing round of reynard a satisfaction far deeper than anything had brought the neighbors, whether their long suits had been godliness, or love of woman, or proud clothes or pride of place.

Barrett made only a living from his place. He was not a man of cattle, or of sheep, or a breeder of horses. What energy was left him after his daily chores were done went

into his dogs. Even of them he did not keep a large kennel, but at most a dog and bitch. He bred his hounds most carefully, keeping beagle blood in his strain of fox hounds. He sold the pups, or gave one now and then to intimates worthy to own such beasts. Fred Ashfield, when he bought the place, found a pedigree there, hidden away under the floor.

Barrett lavished care on the quarters of his hounds while they were living and he buried them under field stone markers when they died. They rest on a grassy ridge between hayfields and a hemlocked gorge that falls away quickly to some depth just back of the house. Three stones are as pointed as obelisks, and a fourth stone so like many stones in a nearby wall that you cannot tell whether it is a grave stone or not. His dogs were sprung of a famous race of hounds, and their progeny is still held precious on the hills above Bradford. One in the possession of a crony of Barrett's obtained fame by killing a bobcat in fair fight last winter. It is held round about that this dog should have a cut stone slab, legended, over him when his day is done.

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## The Little Morgan

[for CLARENCE G. HOAG]

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ALL through Vermont and New Hampshire the Morgan horse was yesterday the rival of the dog as "the friend of man." There was many a horseman loved his roadster or racer sprung from Justin the Great even better than he loved his hound or shepherd. The horse was a pet as surely as the dog. In those homesteads where living rooms and woodsheds and stables and barn were one long range of buildings the Morgan was in instances almost a household pet, making his way indoors from his stall to the kitchen door for crusts or sugar. He was petted almost as a child is petted, talked to in baby talk as the dog was, stroked about the muzzle and called "a nice old fellow, yes he was" as the dog that brought in the sheep or rounded the fox to where his master could shoot it.

There was always, too, a sense of distinction about the man who owned a Morgan. Too cobby to be aristocratic as the Arabians are, the Morgans were gentlemen and ladies, just as certain dogs are, Labrador retrievers for one breed. When we went down into Tuftonboro to the Wingate auction, the long stables on the place were pointed out to us, and it was announced to us, with half bated breath, that they had once housed Morgans.

Frank Bryer recited to us as one of the memorable achievements of his life his expedition up into Vermont to buy a dozen or so pedigreed Morgans for a man out in Illinois. He was quartered in a horse Pullman for the trip, a three months expedition, and every horse he bought was as carefully examined as to points and ancestry as if he were to join a racing stable.

We knew Harry Blanchard on the race track down on the interval north of Bennett's Corners in Tamworth long before we knew him as a collector of antiques. He was then driving Safeguard, his Morgan of Morgans, who won him so many races, and who now is buried, with all his racing paraphernalia and equipment, by a great boulder with his name carved on it at Sunshine Farm. We had talks now and then with Harry about his Morgans, but somehow our talks were always interrupted or curtailed by the exigencies of his business. We never had those talks out, either in the summer of nineteen thirty-seven or the summer of nineteen thirty-eight. It was a most pleasant surprise, then, to receive from him, in early December of nineteen thirty-eight, a letter *re Morgans*. He wrote: "Sometime ago you spoke to me about Morgan horses. Now I have a chance to answer you fully. As we are having an old fashioned northeast snowstorm up here in Sandwich it carries my mind off antiques to the good old horse days. I think of nice sleigh rides in the crispy New Hampshire air and of the excitement and thrills of horse racing on the ice in the winter time and of the buggy rides and the horse racing in the summer time on the dirt. So I thought it would be a good time to write you a few lines about Morgans while the snow was falling and the wind was whistling out-of-doors and we were snug and comfortable with plenty of good dry wood burning in the stoves indoors.

"For more than thirty years, from my boyhood on, I bought and sold and traded horses, and bred and trained

colts and raced horses. I have owned all breeds and all kinds good and bad, but of all of the horses I ever owned and trained I liked the Morgan breed of horses the best. They are the quickest to learn to work or drive or race. Once they are taught they never forget. You can teach a Morgan colt to do most anything but talk. A Morgan is high strung and frisky, but always good natured if you keep the whip away from him. They are very affectionate and like to be petted, and the better you treat a Morgan horse the more loyal he will be to you, his master. A kind word of encouragement to a Morgan in a race in a tight place will make him give the best there is in him.

"I had one named Sunshine that I owned at the time I bought this farm where I live now. I won several races with him. I liked him and I named this farm in his honor, Sunshine Farm. But the Morgan horse that I liked the best of any horse I ever saw was a bay gelding named Safeguard. I won over a hundred races with him on the dirt and on the ice. He trotted lots of one half mile heats in one minute and lots of quarters on the ice in twenty-eight seconds and some quarters in twenty-seven seconds on the ice.

"My beloved Safeguard was a descendant of Justin Morgan, named after the man who purchased that famous horse in Massachusetts in 1795 and took him to Randolph in Vermont as a three year old. This great Justin Morgan was so strong-blooded as a sire that every Morgan horse living today from Maine to California is like him. Wherever you find a Morgan horse one glance is enough to identify it as a descendant of Justin Morgan. They all have his color, shape, style, limbs, feet, head. His blood must have been of the purest or it never could have ruled in mastery over all other bloods in the Morgans descended from him. Morgan horses have great endurance as well as great strength and speed for their size."



Fuller particulars of the ancestry and qualities of the Morgans are to be found in a black octavo volume of 1856 by D. C. Linsley of Middlebury, Vermont. Its long and specific title is so interesting I give it in full: *Morgan Horses: A Premium Essay on the Origin, History and Characteristics of this Remarkable Breed of Horses; Tracing the Pedigrees from the Original Justin Morgan, through the most Noted of his Progeny, Down to the Present Time, with Numerous Portraits, to which are Added Hints for Breeding, Breaking, and General Use and Management of Horses, with Practical Directions for Training and for Exhibition at Agricultural Fairs*, New York, C. M. Saxton, Publisher, No. 25 Park Row, 1856.

Mr. Linsley thus describes the Morgan in his preface: "The most casual observer of a good Morgan horse is conscious that he sees a peculiar animal. His short, light, rapid steps point to the great muscles which give him motion. His prominent, clear, eager eyes, set wide apart, testify to his courage and docility—while his clean light head, carried high, with short pointed, sensitive ears, gives grace and elegance to every motion." Mr. Linsley believes that "the cold, dry atmosphere, and pure water of our mountains has contributed as much as the rich pastures of our valleys to the stoutness and lastingness of our horses."

This lastingness all lovers of the Morgans bear testimony to. Linsley declares that at the age of "twenty we see them exhibiting constitutions as unimpaired, limbs as free from any sort of blemish, and almost as supple and sinewy as when first broken to harness."

A friend of ours in Tamworth owned a pair of dappled browns that he drove over from Vermont after his purchase of them. They carried us over from Birch Interval to his home on Brown Hill at a good clip, trotting up grade as well as on the level, and taking the steep descent of

Pease Hill with caution and circumspection. They were knowing creatures, seeming to have a quizzical appreciation of the vagaries of their owner. Inviting us to dinner and telling us he would come to fetch us over the six miles between his place and ours, he informed us after dinner, and a very good dinner at that, that he hoped we would not mind walking home as he did not have the time to drive us back. Still in the surrey, the chunky little horses started to back round at this announcement, but they could not shame him into taking us home again. The walk did not hurt us. We were not much more than half way through our allotted three score and ten at the time, and the dinner had been generous and topped off with strawberry shortcake and plenty of whipped cream. Our eccentric neighbor called on us once again, fastening the little Morgans to the railing of our front porch, which they nibbled reflectively as they switched at the flies that were tormenting them. I was sorry I got to know them no better. They were an engaging pair, but since we did not feel we owed so peculiar a host a dinner call we never met them again after the day they rounded off the top rail of our porch railing.

Robert Frost celebrates "a little Morgan" in "The Runaway," and it is a Morgan I always see giving his "harness bells a shake" in "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening." I hope some day he will give us another poem on a Morgan. Justin Morgan, the first of the line, has a memorial in Vermont, but his race of horses has not had the praise it deserves. No other breed has been more intimately a part of American life, not Kentucky trotter, or foxhunter from Ireland, or cowboy's mustang.

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## A Wonder of Fryeburg

[for CHESTER WEED]

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THERE was a farmer I worked for over in Fryeburg," said Win Tappan, "who never had to get up any wood for the winter same as most have to, by felling and sawing and splitting. He had a big interval farm along the Saco in Maine, just over the New Hampshire State line. All the wood he needed, twenty cords or so, came down river from New Hampshire. Freshes spread it along the edges of his hayfields just above the river banks. Most of the haying then was by scythe, and it was easy for the men to avoid the logs when they were mowing. What always surprised a new hand, though, was Odiorne's orders to them to load in the wood along with the grass on the hayracks. Most of the logs that lodged in the hayfields were short ones, none longer than sixteen feet, so it wasn't too much trouble for the hands to get them into barn along with the hay.

"In the bays the rats worked on the logs more than a mite, and when the pieces of logs were thrown into the tie-ups along with the hay before the oxen and cows and horses, the creatures cribbed them and reduced the logs were left long by the rats into proper fireplace length, two feet, say, or two feet and a half. That New Hampshire spruce and

pole and pine agreed, too, with those Maine creatures. The horses of Odiorne had the sleekest coats, his oxen put on the most weight, his cows gave the most milk, of any horses or oxen or cows in Fryeburg or thereabouts. And all he had to do to fill up his woodshed was to gather up the pieces of wood he found before the creatures."

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## Loblolly, Switchel or Ginger Water

[I.M. ELBRIDGE TILTON]

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**I**T goes without saying in New Hampshire that men in the harvest field must have a drink especially prepared for that taxing labor. It was oatmeal water I became acquainted with at Charles Fellows', oatmeal water, and hard cider carefully administered. The oatmeal water was at hand all day long, the hard cider was administered early in the morning, when the men arrived shortly after they had breakfasted. If everything went well, and the men had horses who could take them home, there might be another glass of hard cider at quitting time.

I had heard much talk, from my first summering in Sandwich, of the encouragement that rum gave to the harvesters in old time, but hard cider had driven out rum by the time I came along to observe men and manners in our hill town. I heard of the rum ring, a hollow tube of redware pottery slung over the shoulder by a strap, and I finally secured one down toward Boscawen. The harvest jug, however, that played such a part in the rural economy of Pennsylvania, I have failed to find in New Hampshire.

It was the good ladies in charge of the exhibition of antiques in the Old Russell House in Plymouth who first told me of loblolly. They had it in the variant "lopdoddy," but



THE WILLEY HOUSE



they had its ingredients as molasses, vinegar and ginger and water, pretty nearly the mixture I find was used from Mason to Colebrook, from Orfordville to Eaton. "Loblolly" I knew only as "loblolly pine," and "loblolly bay," but reference to the dictionary revealed it also as the oatmeal gruel I was familiar with.

Correspondence and talks with friends deeply versed in yesterday brought out various different concoctions used here and there in the harvest field. An old lady in Campton Bog insisted the harvest drink must have boiled hard cider in it, and she preferred nutmeg to ginger to give it spice. The Squire of West Plymouth voted, too, for the boiled hard cider, agreeing with those who said the harvest drink should be composed of boiled hard cider, melted maple sugar, molasses, vinegar and nutmeg. His expatiation on this concoction led him to a panegyric on boiled hard cider and the brandy-like flavor it gave to boiled hard cider pie, a pie, I, in my innocence, had never even heard of.

Reference of the matter to that last of the polymaths, Clarence Child, led to a disquisition on swizzle, a drink he had known the sailors of Newport to think necessary to heavy work at sea. The Squire of West Plymouth would have none of swizzle, though, maintaining that switchel was the preferable term. He talked well and long on switchel and switchel sticks, thin sticks with their side twigs left on to an inch in length on either side of the main stem six inches long and twirled between the two hands to mix thoroughly the ingredients in the switchel glass, or flip glass. He would have none, too, of loblolly, holding it an outland term not indigenous to the Pemigewasset Valley or the valley of Baker's River or the valley of the Connecticut.

Here is the definition of switchel as Webster's dictionary has it: "a drink made of molasses and water, sometimes with vinegar, ginger or rum added." That is pretty good for



a dictionary definition, which has seldom the tang you get from those given you in the farmhouses in back country places. I am sorry the ladies of Plymouth had not carried out their original intention of giving loblolly to those of us who visited their exhibition of the things of yesterday. Then I could speak of what it was on the tongue. All my discussion of it is purely academic. I have never tasted it in any of its forms in the moil and toil of the harvest field. Only he who has so tasted it can speak with any authority of its savour or its effects.

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## Hard Names for November

[for MAISIE and CLIFTON LUNT]

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NOVEMBER belongs to no season rightly," said Alvie. "It beant winter, though the threat of winter be in it. It beant spring, though there be mild days of Indian summer, when jays and tom tits call as if it was. That naming of it Indian summer be all wrong. It just brings back the fear the old settlers had of those killers come down from Canady. There be no growing days in November, and summer means growing days if it means anything. November is not rightly fall, either. It's just a kind of loose month doesn't fit in tight with any of the seasons. It's a hunting month, yes, but I was never a hunter, so I can't say I ever looked forward to it. Those be the fellows like it, those fellows after deer. It's a kind of betwixt and between month for most of us. In the old days when there was religion in folks it was said November was the month there was more praying done than any other month. Winter is just ahead then, and winter puts the fear of God in men's hearts. Or it may be Thanksgiving and Christmas stirred their bowels of compassion and set them thinking on Godly things."

Alvie had the right to speak of northern Novembers, for he had lived through a long lifetime of them. He had faced the ensuing winters stoically. He had not had to gird him-

self to brave them as had some of his younger neighbors who had known wander years with city comforts, and—discomforts. This man said: "I have never been in jail, but I am sure it could not be worse than the five months from first snow to mud time, five months of confinement to your own house and wood shed and barn and woodlot." These sentiments were of years before the plowing out of the roads and of sanding them so that cars can run all winter long. In the stormy winter of 1935-36, when the snow on our hill lay five feet on the level you could not see our house after the plough went through. It tossed up the snow so that it was nine feet high between road and house.

The testimony of one man and another about November differs very greatly. A city man come to live in a neighboring village says it is the most cheerless of months. The color of the leaves is gone and there is no great mirror of snow to reflect the sun and make all the world cheerful. "November is pretty dreary," says his wife. "The days are shorter than you could believe any days could be. The sun rises late and it is gone by half-past three. There are mountains east and mountains west. The sun sneaks round the shortest arc." She indicated about a quarter of the horizon, being a graphic raconteur, and daring in pantomime to be even more graphic than she would trust herself to be in words. "It's bitter cold, too, by the end of the month. It's below zero most years by Thanksgiving, and we have snow. You can see it coming in on us before it falls here, a sort of mist it looks like, driving in above the lake from the northwest, from far beyond Mt. Washington. You begin then to realize you must rely on your fires, and you are glad of the twenty cords of white birch, worked up to stove length, that you have in wood shed and barn. Ah! it's sinister, that cold, and the light is sinister, too, or the absence of light, under those low-hanging clouds of grey.

"Yes, November is one of the worst months. There is most snow in March, and the snow isn't gone until May, but in November the first snow comes. It makes you realize what's to follow in the real winter. Nobody who hasn't spent November to May here can believe what our five months' winter is like. All that winter is ahead in November. It's what we all of us here have to face makes us so tolerant, perhaps, of one another. There is no censoriousness here, no sitting in judgment on our neighbors. There is nothing of the sort of sharp criticism you read of in certain New England towns. We find a ready excuse for everything that is done."

"November is delightful," said Geraldine Bliss Taylor. "There were quiet days of sun early in the month in 1936, with jays calling and their flute notes carrying far on the mellow air. There were those straight up and down lines to the hardwood forests close by and all the distances lovely blurs of mauves and soft greys and purples even softer. Oh, it was all too good to be true! I thought of my people here long ago and I asked old neighbors about them. They told me about grandmother sitting in church when the cold was beginning to strengthen, with a Paisley shawl about her shoulders. They told me about the children coming down Page Hill, barefooted, to school, never thinking of putting on shoes till snow fell, except for church of Sundays.

"Then it came cold, before Thanksgiving, as cold they told us afterwards as it was all winter, and then came the snow. There wasn't much of it but I was afraid I could not get my boy to school at Tamworth one morning. The men came by to clear the road, however, and I caught a truck following them and it drove in one driveway and out the other and I could follow after that the track it made. Every morning, too, after it turned icy, they had the road sanded before we had to leave for school.

"We kept us snug and warm as could be. I love tending fires, wood fires. We had one in every room. Grandmother was right, I know now, when she used to say that she was never so warm in the city visiting as when she stayed at home here in Chocorua. It's the best heat, that given by wood burning. And the smell of it, and the sense you have of defeating the cold. My people did that for three generations here before I came along, but they were with me all the time I was here, and that was until the week before Christmas. Isn't it too bad I cannot keep down the brush as they did. I just hate to see the whole country growing up, fields I knew now woods and the views my people knew, and the houses of the neighbors, what ones are left, shut out even when the leaves fall, so thick are the woods, even the lights at night shut off. There is no life I ever heard of or read of that I should so have liked to live as that here a hundred years and more ago. Yes, I love life tending fires in November as well as life troutng in July."

Charles Fellows held November "the hardest month." He said:

"November be the hardest month. You be waiting and waiting for the snow, and, maybe, it won't be flying after all till December. When it once comes and the ground be covered you have such a taste of the worst you be kind of reconciled to what follows. It is that waiting and waiting for snow in late November, long towards Thanksgiving, that is so hard to bear. Indian summer be passable enough for us today, but in old times it was desperate with the fear in folks of those savages sneaking down from Canady, and raiding and killing and carrying off the women and burning the log houses and the corn and hay was stored against the winter.

"Indian summer today be the calm before the storm. It's deceiving, that warm week or two, and the crows not yet

gone for the winter and some red leaves yet in stumpage and where they have been brushing along the roads, and may be a few pale asters and a bend or two of goldenrod in a sheltered place by a wood. There be grey trees, leafless, in the stands of timber, and rose lights in them in the late sunrise, and other promises of soft weather that the time of year can't make good. The big woodpecker be gay such days, calling most like a flicker in spring, but more gentle, and making the chips fly from the telephone poles along the road, and from any old stub be hiding a grub or two.

"Then, some morning, before it be light, a northeaster will set in, a driving rain that'll last three days, with wind that moans about the house and finds its way into the barn at every crack and cranny, and cleans the threshing floor of all the chaff when you open the barn door wide. At fall of night the third day, the rain will stop, and the cold come down. I've known it to drop near zero before the morning after, and more than once, too. Then come those days the hunters like, days of late November and of opening December, with perhaps a light fall of snow, a tracking snow to show where the deer be moving about. Hang your deer from a pole between two trees when you get him, and be sure he's higher'ner a bobcat can jump and farther from the crotched trees that hold the pole from which he is slung. He'll keep there nice all winter through if you don't eat him too fast.

"Once the snow be deep in the woods, come Christmas, there be lots of work lumbering and getting in cordwood and sawing ice and the like. There be fishing through the ice on the ponds and lakes, and a good deal of visiting. In November, though, folks be sitting round waiting for winter to come. We have the cellars banked with roughage or sawdust by October's end. There just beant much more than chores in November. There be odd jobs, of course, you

might do, jobs you kept putting off earlier in the fall, things you don't want to do and have no fun doing. If you put 'em off now you'll be worse off, but you be not likely to get round to 'em just the same. You haven't much heart for work in November. Yes, November be the hardest month, half fall, half winter, but neither really. November be neither fish nor flesh nor fowl, but we have to take it as it comes. Ah me! Ah me!"

In the interval for lunch of the auction I approached Frank Bryer. He was a mite tired. He was resting against a maple chest with both arms extended and his hands resting on either end of it. I said to him: "Talk to me about November." The lids narrowed over those eyes of pale blue, the eyes twinkled, and then went still. In the quietest tones he said: "I like it. There are times it's too cold, but mostly it's an easy month. There's the hunter's moon then, the loveliest nights, white and without wind, and the leaves coming down so that you can see across country same as they did in old times when so much land was cleared. The boys begin to think of trapping then. They see the horses and cattle slicking up for winter, their coats I mean, the hair thickening and growing glossy. If the creatures in field be fine in their coats, it's likely so be the creatures in woods, bears, fishers, mink and bobcats.

"Ah me! How well I remember when I was a boy up Rock Maple Ridge, on that old road runs up from Jonathan Tappan's corner. It was in November the coons came down on the shocked corn, and we let the dogs loose after them. Coon roast was plenty good, and not like beef now, seventy-five cents a pound. Eh, but those were the days! And I'm not here in November now, but down in Concord! Tain't right, you know, not to be in Sandwich then. The reason I'm here now is that I'm not here enough most times of year. Concord and Rockingham be good places in their way, but

they're not Sandwich. I had a three months' job offered me across the border in Massachusetts, in Lowell, and good money, but I'd rather be up here, meeting the people I know. I hain't got much time left now, and I'd rather spend what I have left among the people I know. They're friendly here, and they like the places I'm most used to, even if they aren't all born here.

"Ah me! but I used to be restless when I wasn't much more'n a boy, 'specially along about when the hunter's moon come. It was the drovier's moon for me more'n the hunter's moon. I was away with Old Niles' gang up to Vermont, gathering cattle. We would come down along, crossing at Wells River, and up Wild Amonoosuc to Landaff and Woodstock, and on to Thornton, and up through Sandwich Notch, and on, sometimes all the way to Brighton, a long tramp that, but health giving work, out of doors, and with leaves kicked up all the way. There was a tavern then, you know, up the Notch. There's a big willow now to show where it was, that's all. Back along, though, there was good times there, a little wild maybe, but nothing to what the boys in the cities are up to nowadays.

"Did you ever see a drove of creatures under way on a mountain road? It wasn't easy to face 'em when the road was narrow. Any little thing that would excite them would send them into stampede. There weren't so many bear then as there are now, but once in a while some old Devon steer would scent one, and bellow, and the whole herd would be off like mad. They would slip on those ledges by the Halls—awful nice woman, old Mis. Hall—and pile up sometimes, but mostly they did themselves no hurt. The mill was running up there then, not far from where the railroad crossed the Notch Road later. There were about twenty families up there then. There were forty before that, and sixty, some say, still earlier. Only twenty were there, though, in my



time, but kids enough to be waving, one bunch every mile, to the drove pounding by.

"It's a long while since I saw the Notch in November, and a drove of steers going through. That's all over now, those three or four or five days on the road with cattle, in the year's best weather, Indian summer, I mean, sometime in November. The drovier's month I call it, and its moon the drovier's moon, white nights, and quiet, with the scent of leaves on the air. The 'Wild' Amonoosuc was tame enough then, when we were droving, and Mad River weren't 'mad.' What names those old fellows gave to places! The creatures were wild enough, though, some of them, gathered in from mountain pastures where they had been left to themselves, save for salting, all summer long. And the droviers were a mite wild, too, old ones as well as young. Maybe the boys were just young blooded, but some of those old fellows had been liquoring for thirty years. Some say, you know, that folks aren't responsible on nights of full moon. Moon madness they call it, but it ain't much else than young blooded or wild blooded. Yes, it was always a good month, November, when I was twenty, and so it is now, I guess. Yes, I like November."

"They say November is the beginning of the end of things," said Barzilla, "but I say it is the beginning of beginnings. Some of those Adventist fellows look for the Second Coming then, and the world going out in fire and earthquake. Others just mean that most work for the year is over, and that folks hole up for the winter, like woodchucks. That may be, but if they do this old chuck keeps popping his head out and looking round to see what's going on. There's a lot to see and hear even in November. There's high times for bears then for one thing."

Barzilla paused, waiting to be questioned as to what he meant by "high times for bears." All was peace and security

in the long parlor. Barzilla had come to the restfulness of eighty, to a ripe and tolerant age. He was of the fourth generation of his family to live here, in the low house of white under the rock maples, by the twin barns eastward out in the sun. There was still high color in his cheeks and bright quiet in his eyes. His voice had suavity, nuances of feeling, assured authority. Old account books come on in the neighborhood of men who had worked at all five places along the mountain road always wrote down the Huntresses as esquires, and the neighboring farmers as plain John Smiths.

Barzilla looked out across the interval where the men were haying with a motor truck. "Yes, Black Snout is a real mountain. I climbed it more than once when I was tramping, but it isn't Whiteface." I was evidently not to be told about those "high times for bears" if I did not ask the expected question. "I remember the time there was half the country cleared land as you looked out from there. The last time I was up, it may be ten years ago, it may be fifteen, all you could see was a bit of cleared land here and there, certainly not more than a twentieth of the landscape farmland, and a church steeple sticking up above the trees to show where a village had been.

"Yes, we've two pictures of Whiteface here," he went on, pointing to one of fifty-five years ago, and to another of a generation before that. "You'll see a great deal more of the bare cliffs on Whiteface in that picture," he said, pointing to the more recent one. "That was painted from down the lane where there were six elms in a row on either side. Of the twelve only one is left now. You will see all the ridge back of the house was pasture then. Just look at it now, all grown up to timber trees. Come here to the back window, you can see it better." We passed the stove, set up before the great fireplace covered in. We noted the pewter tankard

and four communion cups of pewter on the centre of the mantelpiece, and the pair of Bristol vases in white and gold at either end.

The second picture showed "a rural scene" in the foreground, with cattle and horses, after the fashion of a hundred years ago. It showed even more of the cliffs on Whiteface. It was evidently painted after the landslide of 1830 that bared the rockface. The conversation fell as I took in that slat back chair and this empire sofa in the room, its low ceilinged cosiness, the windows north opening out on Whiteface, the window south opening out on the Ossipees. I thought it was about time I asked about what high times bears had in November. I asked.

"The other night," said Barzilla, "I was a mite wakeful. I lay there thinking of what this country was coming to, none too cheerful thoughts. My mind was taken off such matters quicker than you could wink by a calling out back, not far from the house. It was an old bear talking to her cubs. It was just the calling we had heard making the trip around the mountains last week. We stopped then and picked out two cubs up a tree. The mother was so anxious for their safety she came out into the open, calling the pair of them down so they might escape those men folks. It's in the fall, though, that the bears most give tongue. That's their rutting time, and the old fellows cover miles on the hunt for a mate. Perhaps I oughtn't to say 'old fellows' for I often think maybe it's the young fellows that make the most noise. They are roaming around disconsolate, lifting up their voices in lamentation for their lonely state. Their calls are a sort of cross of a bull calf's blare and a locomotive whistle, not so loud but of good carrying quality. You'll hear one calling one night and none other for a week. They are great travellers. The fellow you heard is, perhaps, next night down on the flats after scrub oak acorns, running the

chance of being shot. I got one once there. There'd been so many frosts the leaves were all brown and dry. It was late afternoon with the sun low but warm for the time of year. It was comfortable there and I dozed. Maybe I fell asleep. I was wary, though, even then, and I wakened to hear an old fellow come shuffling along through those scrub oaks thick with dried leaves. My rifle came to my shoulder automatically and I had my bear shot and killed before I knew what it was all about.

"No, I haven't shot one since. What troubles me is the ones you shoot and don't kill. I can't stand thinking of one dragging himself in under some slash and licking and licking and licking his wounds, and maybe starving to death in the end. Do you know, thinking of bears hiding in, that last winter was so mild they never denned at all, but were tramping all winter through. That don't happen often here.

"But to get back to the bears mating. The calls he makes then, and her answerings, aren't exactly sweet sounds. I have never seen their love making, but their hoarse whistling, if you can call it that, sort of gives life to November's gloom. Yes, it's that, gloom. You read about hounds baying through the bare woods after foxes, and the hunter's cheerful horn. Well, there is no horning in hunting here, and since Joe Hobbs died there are no hounds whose baying is anything like music to me. Do you remember those big black and tan fellows, the pair of them long eared and soft eyed and friendly? No, Charles Chase doesn't keep dogs any longer. There is not a bear dog anywhere about.

"That bears' blaring puts heart in me. There's winter ahead, and winter here is a good deal of an ordeal some years. It's a dry cold, but day after day below zero is a mite trying. Then you are carrying wood to the fires all the time. There's trouble, too, with pipes freezing, no matter how careful you are. There's the sound of those calls of the mat-

ing bears in my ears all winter through until the creatures are thawed out in spring. There's life in those calls. They mean there will be more bears by winter's end. They mean cold can no more kill bears than it can kill boys. I say to myself when I hear that whistling or blaring—I wish I could find the right word for it—'Bears will be bears as sure as boys will be boys. Yes, or as girls will be girls.' After all bears are as knowing and useful as a good many folks. I don't hold at all with this wholesale killing of them there has been lately.

"What would these mountains be without bears? What would November be without the noise of them mating? I have heard it all my life. It is just as much a sign that winter's coming as the first flying of snow, or that sound of winter in the wind, that sound will be in your ears all the time for close to six months. Only wind and snow flying mean endings of things, and the bears' blaring beginnings. There's comfort in thinking of that old bear denned up snug and warm, waiting for the coming of her cubs. There's comfort in thinking of her denned in there in a cave full of leaves, giving milk to them, and they no bigger than cats, having plenty of milk for them from the fat she put on from berries and beechnuts and acorns. When you take to mind all there is to that fall calling of bears you will like the sound of it. November would not be November without the calling of bears."

There are more that dread November than love it, there is no doubt of that. I could quote a dozen who wish they could escape to Florida as a good few do, or at least be off to Boston where there are movies every day. Now that city folks come in their hundreds skiing the attitude towards winter of the younger folks is beginning to change. Year by year, too, more of the summer people are opening their houses for week-ends or coming up for Christmas or New

Year's. When there was plenty of work in the lumberwoods all winter long the women folks got lonely with the men away, but now with work close by in keeping the roads open and passable and the children taken to school by bus they are more contented. There is, of course, more sickness in winter than in summer, and that will always cause in some people a dread of winter.

Old wives' tales have their share in keeping alive the fear of winter coming on. November is traditionally a gloomy month. The almanacs have a large responsibility in the matter. I think they had something to do with Charles Fellows's attitude. Though some of the verses quoted under Sagittarius are cheerful the most are not. This from *The Farmer's Almanac* of 1817, a Friendly publication, is only mildly discouraging:

'Tis now the season of the year,  
Where vap'ry particles appear,  
To hide the blue serene;  
And ope their sluices charged with rain,  
In torrents o'er the wither'd plain,  
And ev'ry motley scene.

That is the verse quoted under the woodcut of the centaur with drawn bow. Under the column headed "Farmer's Calendar" there is less chilling reading: "Wilt thou hunt? Thy hounds shall make the welkin answer them, and fetch shrill echoes from the halloood earth. Kill no more squirrels than you want for your pie, nor more partridges than you want for your spit."

*The Farmer's Almanac* for 1829 believes November is the will of God. Thus the verse so owning it runs:

Why do the seasons change?—and why  
Does winter's stormy brow appear?  
It is the word of Him on high,  
Who rules the changing varied year.

Under "November, Eleventh Month 1830" the verse reads:

Melancholy looks the scene,  
O'er the forest once so green;  
Hoary frost and low'ring skies,  
Tell us winter soon will rise.

The cheerlessness is deepened in the verses the editor chooses for 1839:

The howling of the northern blast  
Proclaims dread winter near;  
Perhaps with us 'twill be the last,  
And finish our career.

In the issue for 1842 we are told what culture will do to offset the rigors of November weather:

When all without is bleak and drear,  
Within the humble cot  
Choice books and conversation cheer;  
Though many prize them not.  
The cultured mind, with virtue's shield,  
To lures of vice will seldom yield.

The editor returns to the strain of "The melancholy days have come" in 1843 with these lines:

Now sombre clouds o'erspread the skies,  
And cast a gloom o'er hill and lea;  
Cold is the wind, bleak storms arise,  
And tune their mournful minstrelsy.

He strikes this note again in 1847 when he quotes:

Now chilly winds and sombre skies  
Spread gloom and sadness all around;  
A mournful scene to greet the eyes,  
To greet the ears a mournful sound.

It is in what we must assume are the effusions of Mr. Thomas or who succeeded him as editor that occurs what cheerfulness we find inspired by November. Thus in the "Farmer's Calendar" for 1856 we find under the caption *Summer's Songs are o'er!*: "The lark no more is heard to whistle over the lawn, but the mild *Indian summer*, of which so many are most fond, brings us the booming note of the solitary partridge, who, in some deep glen, now struts along, back and forth, like a military dandy upon his old fallen hemlock, beating out the *thorough-bass* with his nervous drumsticks, to the entertainment of such musical amateurs as love to hear nature's deep tones of solemnity."

There is life and vigor in the verses for 1863:

Clear the brown path to meet his coulter's gleam;  
Lo! on he comes behind his smoking team,  
With toil's bright dewdrops on his sunburnt brow,  
The lord of earth, the hero of the plough.

The judicious, of course, may have an unholy joy in line three, but it is far from "the moping melancholy mad" of most of the November verses. There is a high-hearted moment, too, in *The Farmer's Almanac* for 1865:

when shrieked  
The bleak November winds, and smote the woods,  
And the brown fields were herbless, and the shades  
That meet the merry rivulet were spoiled  
I sought and loved them still.

Even here, though, November is damned as "bleak." The almanac for 1868 invokes the old gloom, no Byronic sadness, but the menace of oncoming winter that has daunted the heart of man from the beginnings of literature:

The chilling blast is hurrying past,  
Across the wild and gloomy sky;  
The tempest moans, in shuddering tones,  
That gloomy winter draweth nigh.



The editor in the seventies appends the names of the writers of the verses he quotes, Emerson, Aubrey de Vere, Carlyle, Herrick, Whittier, Sarah F. Adams among them. It is Charles D. Shandly, however, who is the author of the quatrain that does service in November of 1879:

E'en in these bleak November days  
There's gladness for the heart that heeds,  
The marsh to me no gloom conveys,  
Though the gray frost be on the weeds,

I have quoted so largely from these almanacs because they were a sort of second Bible in many homes in old times, and regarded as authoritative as the words the minister spoke from the pulpit. They told what the farmer should do month by month, and they contained, as they advertised, much "new, useful and entertaining matter." This particular almanac was established in 1793 by Robert B. Thomas. It carried advertisements of other publications of the house that got it out. In a way the almanacs opened up a new world to those who conned them so carefully. All I have come across are well worn. They were consulted again and again and the anecdotes they contained passed into and became a part of local folklore.

Even the Dudley Leavitt *Farmer's Almanac*, as continued by his nephew William B. Leavitt, tells us that "Planetary configurations are numerous this month, and are such as to cause a cold, boisterous time. For the most part unhealthy." This last almanac uses as its woodcut for November not the sign of the zodiac proper to the month, but an ox cart whose driver is throwing out of it most generous and closely placed piles of manure. It prophesies, with nearly complete assurance of its prophecy borne out: "Frequent light snows, on the heights of New Hampshire, but rain near the sea."

That was an event of the year to two brothers who lived

alone on a lonely ridge in Brookfield, with two miles of woods between them and the nearest village, to see the first snows on the Presidential Range. The lady from Boston wanted the two brothers to occupy her home in the village for the winter. It had near neighbors. It had electric light, a radio, modern heating. The brothers were getting up in years. It was harder for them now to be breaking out their lane that led to the back road to the village. They thanked her for the suggestion, but they said they just couldn't do it. It would upset their hens, their cats wouldn't stay in the village, there was no room in her barn for their hay. The old horse wouldn't get her accustomed exercise if they were in the village where they were only a few steps to the store. There were so many good reasons why they couldn't move for the months from November to May that she did not press her offer.

A warm-hearted person she was deeply troubled, though, by the thought of them there way up on the mountain, and cut off, in heavy snowfalls, from all communication with the little world in the valley. She felt she had not the real reason of their refusal. She could appreciate their fondness for the place they were used to, but to her Yankee practicality the comforts they would have would overbalance matters of sentiment. She did not realize that if they had been susceptible to what the sociologists call social betterment they would have gone west in their youth like their great uncles seventy-five years before, or to some New England city like their uncles fifty years before. She was curious to get at the real reason. She had to wait to find out what it was.

One day, two summers later, she found out. A city man wanted to buy their house. To coax them to sell it to him he told them he would let them go on living in it. They would not listen to him, knowing that the arrangement would in the end edge them out. They refused his generous offer. The

brothers were talking about their refusal, and about the view from their house. It looked out not only across Winnetoesaukee to the westward but, as I have said, to the Presidential Range. Her valley home had but the pleasant prospect of the village and the hills rising round. Finally one of the old men said, no thought, perhaps, of her old offer in his mind: "It is all right for those who like it here in the village, but for me I'd be wanting to know when the first snow fell on Washington. That might be in October, but here in the village you would not know of it. It might not be until early November, but here in the village you would not see it. Think what it would be not to see all the world northward fill up with white for Thanksgiving. Think what it would mean to us to be shut up in the village in November, in November, when for the first time since May you can see all that's to be seen." The other brother broke in: "Yes, it's November gives us the full view northwards. We just couldn't be happy without Washington and the rest of them where we could see them day by day with the snow on them. Everything is in that view."

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## Of Sap Strainers and Dunce Caps

[for WALLACE ARNOLD]

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IT was what had most smack of the soil and of yesterday at the country auction. It was a conical piece of butter-nut colored felt slung from a rim of brown ash. Few in the crowd knew what it was, but Frank Bryer who was crying the auction was one who did, one of perhaps a dozen in the crowd of over a hundred. He was born up on Rock Maple Ridge on a place that was, before the whole countryside had grown up to forest again, in sight of this Plummer Farm whose possessions were being sold. "A sap strainer," he called out, "Yessir, a sap strainer!" I almost failed to get in my bid, but he saw me at the last minute, and a memento of the auction was mine.

I hate to go home from a country sale at a place whose people I have known without something intimately theirs, something that recalls hearty folks long known with whom I have had good talks. I had known Will Plummer since our first summer in New Hampshire, the summer of nineteen twelve spent in Birch Interval. I was glad, indeed, to have his sap strainer. Later at the auction I was to secure five Sandwich sauce dishes, grape design, but they had not been part of his life as had this adjunct of sapping, one of the important functions of the year.

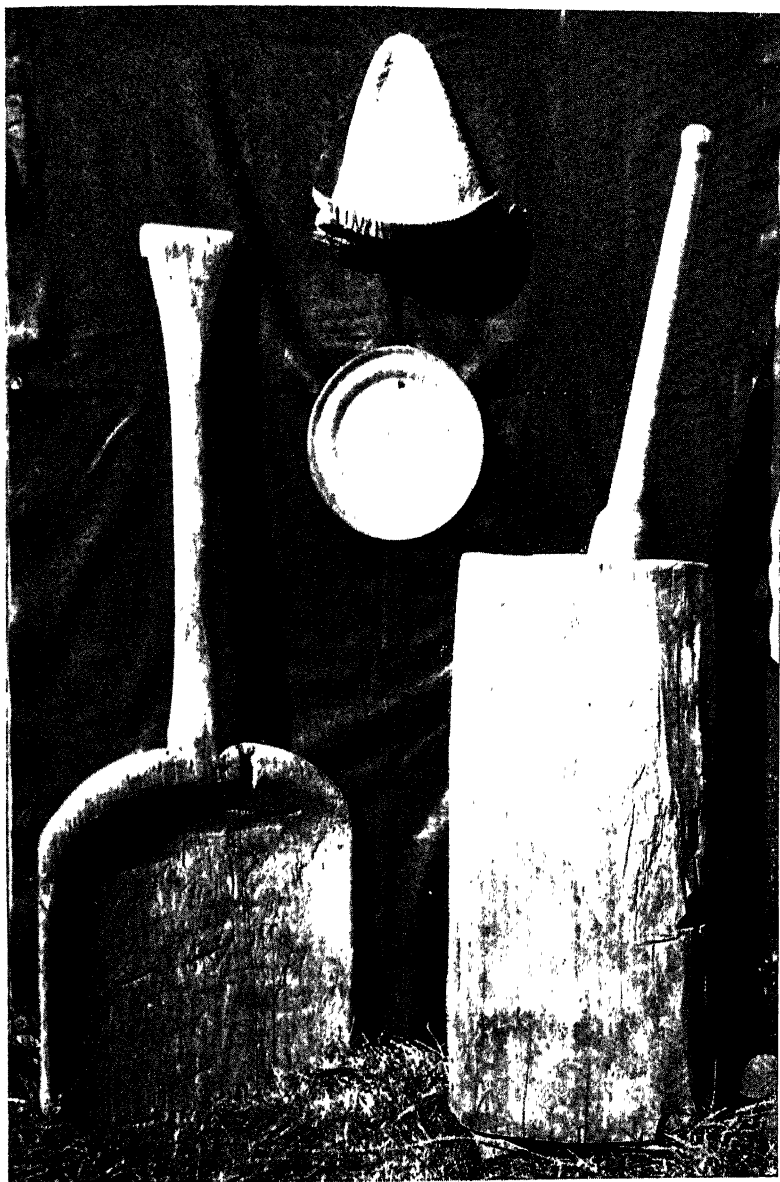
The strainer's rim of brown ash was made to catch over the top of an old fashioned sap bucket of wood, a sap bucket of white pine generally in our neighborhood, though a little to the southward they are almost all of them made of oak. The rim of brown ash was sewed to the warm-hued felt with a tough twine, perhaps a twine made of linen. Three generations ago fields roundabout were blue with flax, and linen bases for hooked rugs, and linen samplers, and linen towels, and linen sheets were staples of the neighborhood. My old wooden square brass-bound at corner and ends tells me the pouch of felt is nine inches deep and nine inches in diameter. It has shrunk a little, I think, and bits of the rim have been broken out. It was once, I take it, twelve inches in diameter so it could accommodate itself to the size of sap bucket standard in Sandwich.

No sooner was the sap strainer in my possession than one oldster after another edged round to me to have a look at it. Said one of them, "I couldn't get one like that, the kind I was brought up to use as a boy, so I took me an ordinary felt hat, a Danbury hat, and boiled it and boiled it, until I had all the dye they had used to color it. It worked well enough but I'm glad to see one of the old sort again."

He couldn't tell me, though, just what the felt was made of. The base, of course, was wool, but maybe there was some sort of fur worked in to it along with the wool, a bobcat's maybe, or a Canada lynx's, or just a pussy cat's.

Said another: "Wilbur Quimby has one, and, like yours, it is a mite moth-eaten. So he put it away with camphor balls in it. They fixed the moths all right, but that spring's sugar, too. All of the sap run through it took on a taste of tar camphor and the syrup and sugar they made of it. He boiled it out again, and the next season's sugar was as it should be."

Three or four said: "They used to use those strainers for



FOOL'S CAP AND WOODEN UTENSILS



dunces' caps in the schools up here. They would put a high chair, like those made for store desks, in a corner, and pull a strainer down over the poor boy's ears, and make him climb up on the chair and sit there." One of those who remembered such use of the strainer, George Weed, was cruel enough to say: "It is, perhaps, appropriate that you bid it in. God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform."

It is April woods the strainer brings up to me: snow still on the ground; the first blossoms of the hobble bush scenting the air; cries of nesting pileated woodpeckers; blue smoke drifting from the chimney of a sap-house; great oxen, white-faced, hitched to a pung with a great vat upon it; and a bright faced boy in a lumberman's shirt of black and red, walking at their heads, goad in hand.



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## Good-Bye, Old Israel, Good-Bye

[for ALBERT BOYDEN]

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ONE wonders is it true that the emigrants from our hill farms in Sandwich to the west were the middling people. Middling, they say the emigrants were, in fortune, in ability, in will to work. Certainly they were those discontented with their lot at home, who thought they could better themselves by giving up their stony acres in the north country for the deep-soiled prairies of Illinois, reputed, too, to be of more genial climate than that the sub-zero winters brought to the country between Black Snout and Whiteface.

There are those who say the emigrants were possessed of a noble discontent, that life was harder than life need be in a countryside in which there may be frost in every month but July and in which the beans may be killed in the low places even in that midsummer time. Even the high energy, their sympathizers say, these people had, could not cope with the late springs and early falls and the long winters of mountain New Hampshire. It is true that certain well-fixed folks did emigrate, but from all the much talk I have heard about the depopulation of Sandwich, I should judge that few of the most prosperous people did emigrate and still fewer of the least prosperous. It is pretty nearly the truth that it was the "middling" people who went west, energetic

families not satisfied with the moderate prosperity that came to them from corn and cattle, wheat and sheep, flax and maple sugar, shoe shops and lumber mills.

Certain it is that many of the old folks among the emigrants went unwillingly. Certain it is that many of the young folks restrained from going were long unhappy to be stay-at-homes. John Fellows, who lived on the place next to ours, was prevented from going west only by the insistence of his parents that it was his duty as an only son to stand by them as they were growing old. He, however, was reconciled in the end to his place on Fellows Hill. It was the old folks, dragged across country to Albany and thence Mississippi-ward by the Erie Canal who could not adjust themselves to the flatness of the Middle West.

At the home coming gathering at the Quaker Meeting House in North Sandwich in late August of nineteen hundred and thirty-nine Albert Boyden told of the reluctance with which old Grandmother Frey left Sandwich when her family moved west. She knew she would never see her mountains again. Here she had been born and brought up, here she had married and borne children and here she had grown old. Old Israel was before her as she left for the last time her home on the west end of Stevenson Hill. As the road dropped and she could see less and less of its weather-wise peak, she waved to it sadly but gamely: "Good-bye! Old Israel! Good-bye!"

It was no doubt true that she would rather have gone with her folks than have been left behind in loneliness. Yet it was an uprooting from which she could never recover. It seemed a disloyalty to leave the neighborhood her forbears had cleared, the place she had come to as a bride, the tillage that had given her husband and herself their living. It seemed above all a disloyalty to be leaving her dead in their graves, her husband, her children who had died young, her

parents and grandparents. These her people were part of the soil of New Hampshire. These Ossipees and Sandwiches had hung before her eyes blue or peacock-hued, or plum-purple, or dim grey, or white, or molten silver, as the season and the hour and the light decreed. They were very part of her, they evoked a thousand memories, and now she was to see them no more. It was useless for her folks to tell her the mountains were bitten in so sharply on her inner eye that she could never forget them. It was true that she would not forget them, but her memory of them, vivid as it would be, would not be what having them before her was. It was the mountains before her had been to her a daily delight and comfort and refreshment of the spirit. She knew, too, that no matter what the family's luck in the raw land she must never rouse the homesickness would surely fall on her children and grandchildren. She would never see Old Israel again, and she must never speak of it. From this out, too, she must depend on the pains in her joints to tell her rain was coming. Its cloud-capped peak that forbode storm would be looked for in vain over the forlorn prairie.

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